J. W. Morris

(2)

# PHILOSOPHICAL NECESSITY,

AND

# PREDESTINATION

COMPARED,

And the Affinity between the two Principles pointed out in a Variety of Particulars.

IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

*By JOHN GOLLEDGE.*

*Prove all Things, hold fast that which is good.*

PAUL.

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# STRICTURES

ON A WORK ENTITLED AN

## ESSAY on PHILOSOPHICAL NECESSITY

By ALEXANDER CROMBIE.

Theſe Strictures are compriſed in THREE LETTERS, addreſſed to the Rev. T. TWINING.

With an APPENDIX, ſtating the Affinity between NECESSITY and PREDESTINATION.

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# ADVERTISEMENT.

MOST of the things contained in the ſubſequent pages are juſt printed at the end of the Strictures mentioned on the preceding page, but for certain reaſons they are now thrown into the form of a Letter, and publiſhed ſeparately, ſo that they may be had with, or without, the Strictures.

Should vehement exclamations be iſſued againſt my repreſenting, that in my opinion ſin can have no exiſtence, according to predeſtination, I ſhall not be ſurpriſed. But if any predeſtinarian can fairly prove I am miſtaken, and that ſin can exiſt as a crime in man, ſo as for him to deſerve puniſhment, or even blame, on the predeſtinarian principle rightly underſtood, and as exhibited by the authors I have quoted, it is requeſted of him that he will be ſo friendly as to do it. Attempting to ſupercede reaſon will be to no purpoſe—denying that man is only an inſtrument or machine, will be giving up predeſtination;—and ſaying that man is an agent, and acts freely becauſe he *chooſes* to act as he does, and at the ſame time maintaining that he is unavoidably obliged to *chooſe* to act as he does, is imbecility itſelf.

That theological diſcuſſions may be attended to with a view to edification, and conducted with moderation and candour—that error may decline daily—and truth, chriſtian charity, and practical and experimental godlineſs abound, is the prayer of the Author.

# PHILOSOPHICAL NECESSITY AND PREDESTINATION COMPARED.

DEAR SIR,

YOU will permit me to ſtate ſome of the particulars wherein Neceſſity and Predeſtination bear an affinity to each other.

The import of the terms neceſſity and predeſtination is the ſame; as, according to both, all things are predeſtinated and unalterably fixed by God. But it being my deſign to deſcend to particulars, I obſerve,

1ſt. That neceſſity and predeſtination bear an affinity to each other, as both maintain that the will of God is unfruſtrable—that it is his unfruſtrable will all things paſt, preſent, and to come, ſhould be what they have been, are, and will be. The Rev. S. Rowles, who is a predeſtinarian, in his addreſs to Dr. Prieſtley, ſays, "It is ſafe for "us to conclude, I think, with you, that every "even paſt, preſent, and to come, exactly cor-"reſponds to the unchangeable, unfruſtrable will "of God." Revealed Religion Supported. p. 36.

Mr. Jonathan Edwards repreſents God as having a ſecret and revealed will, and that the one may diſapprove and oppoſe the other will, and determine without any inconſiſtence. Enquiry into Freedom of Will, p. 368. It is the ſecret will of God, I ſhould ſuppoſe, that is conſidered as being unfruſtrable, it being evident that his revealed will is fruſtrated daily. According to this hypotheſis, the ſecret and revealed will of God are at variance in millions and millions of inſtances, not to ſay continually at war with each other: as his revealed will commands men to avoid immoral actions, but it is his ſecret will that they ſhould

not avoid them any farther than they do. And his ſecret will being unfruſtrable, not only oppoſes the revealed, but prevails againſt it. Whether the votaries of this ſentiment think God to be ſincere in repreſenting it his will that men ſhould avoid moral evil, in commanding them to avoid it, and threatening them with evil if they do not, or whether they think him chargeable with duplicity, I ſhall not take upon me to ſay.

2d. Neceſſity aſſerts that all events are pre-ordained by God; predeſtination aſſerts that the decrees of God are his eternal purpoſe, according to the counſel of his will, whereby for his own glory he hath foreordained whatſoever comes to paſs.

3d. Neceſſity and predeſtination are alike in that, according to both the doctrines, exhortations, commands, expoſtulations, threatenings, and promiſes of the Bible, cannot produce one good effect in the mind nor conduct of any perſon, further than it is the unfruſtrable will of God, and he hath foreordained they ſhould, nor than what they do. The ſame might be obſerved of all the preaching and religious means in the chriſtian world.

4th. According to neceſſity and predeſtination, it is the unfruſtrable will of God, and he hath foreordained, that only a part of mankind ſhould be virtuous and good in this life, who, according to neceſſity as well as predeſtination, are properly the *Elect*.

5th. On the neceſſarian and predeſtinarian principles, thoſe who are virtuous and good in this life, are made ſo by invincible operations and irreſiſtible influence.

6th. Neceſſity and predeſtination are of the ſame bad tendency, as both tend to influence ſin-

ners to think thus—" If we be of the Elect, ſome " of thoſe God hath foreordained to be virtuous " and good in this life, he will in his own time, " and by his irreſiſtible influence, make us ſuch, " let us prior to that period live how we may :— " but if we be not, we cannot form thoſe charac- " ters do what we will." Careleſs profeſſors thus : " Our being indifferent about religion, and at " times vain and immoral, prove it is the unfruſ- " trable will of God we ſhould be ſo at preſent : " and if it ſhould be his unfruſtrable will in time " to come we ſhould be otherwiſe, he will effect " the change." Supine and worldly minded preachers thus : " It is the unfruſtrable will of " God that we ſhould at preſent be more concer- " ned to *fleece* than to *feed* our flocks ; and if he " have foreordained that we ſhould in future exert " ourſelves to alarm ſinners and bring them to re- " pentance—to convince lukewarm profeſſors of " their danger, to encourage the fearful but wor- " thy chriſtian, and to comfort the virtuous, ſpi- " ritual, and devout, he will ſtir us up to do it." And all who are inclined to comply with tempta- tion, and diſpoſed to diſhoneſty and diſſipation thus : " If we act according to our propenſities " we ſhall do the will of God ; and our actions " when performed will prove it was his unfruſtra- " ble will, and that he foreordained we ſhould " ſo act," &c.

7th. According to neceſſity, the non-elect are invincibly impelled by internal and external mo- tives to purſue vice—and die in the habit of it : According to predeſtination, they are all born ſpiritualiy dead and morally depraved, ſo that they cannot do the will of God, nor avoid living in ſin. Saying " Man was created holy, that de- " pravity is a conſequence of diſobedience, and

" that his inability to do the will of God is not a *natural*, but a *moral* inability," is to no purpoſe. For, on the predeſtinarian principle, it was the unfruſtrable will of God all events ſhould be that ever have been, and he fore-ordained whatſoever comes to paſs as already ſhewn. And Mr. Rowles tells us in his Revealed Religion Supported, " that the introduction of ſin God willed, " or deſigned, or it had never been." p. 35. " And that creation was a voluntary effort of the " divine will, and conſequently every event at- " tendant on its exiſtence muſt be the ſame." p. 244.

Now Adam's eating of the tree of knowledge, and the depravity that followed, being events that came to paſs, events attendant on creation, ſurely according to the above, it was no more in the power of Adam to avoid eating, nor to prevent the depravity that followed, than it was to prevent God from creating the world. And his deſcendants can no more prevent being born ſpiritually dead, and morally depraved, than they can prevent their being born at all; nor than they could had their firſt parents been created deprave. And though the non-elect poſſeſs intelligence, or what is meant by a natural ability to do the will of God, they are deſtitute of what is called a moral ability to do it. And without this it is as impoſſible to do his will as it would if they were deſtitute of a natural ability, or as if they were all downright *ideots*.—And as they are all born without this moral ability, and it is not in their own power, nor in the power of any beſides, but of *God himſelf*, to create it in them, and it is not his pleaſure to do it—they are under the neceſſity of remaining deſtitute of it, and continuing in their ſpiritually dead and mo-

rally depraved ſtate, from their birth till their death. And ſuppoſing that Adam poſſeſſed this moral ability when he was about to eat of the tree of knowledge, it is certain, according to predeſtination, it was not in his power to exerciſe it ſo as to refrain from eating, which was the ſame as if he had not poſſeſſed it. So that the diſtinction between the natural and moral ability and inability, ſo much talked of by Mr. Jonathan Edwards, and others, and repreſented as a thing of great importance, is particularly, as to the non-elect, altogether futile. For if they have not in any part of their life an ability to do the will of God, of what importance is it to call their inability a moral inability, more than natural or human inability? Or by any other name? Sinners on being told from a predeſtinarian pulpit, that they can ſerve God and enjoy the bleſſings of the Goſpel *if they will*, and that *their will-not is their cannot*; might riſe and juſtly reply, "Sir, you know, according to your "own principle, that if we are of the elect we "cannot have the will to ſerve God till it is "his pleaſure to produce it in us by his *irreſiſti-* "*ble influence*; and that if we are not of the "elect we never *ſhall*, we *never can* poſſeſs it." And were they to be further told they ought to pray for a will to ſerve God, they might anſwer, "Available prayer is a ſpiritual act, and you tell "us that we are ſpiritually dead, and that we "were ſo born; conſequently we cannot per- "form this act, nor any other of a ſpiritual "nature, unleſs God is pleaſed to give us ſpi- "ritual life," &c. Where then, on the dangerous hypotheſis I am now ſpeaking, ſhall we fix blame? On the deſcendants of Adam for being born dead and morally depraved! No, for they

cannot prevent it: on the poor reprobates for continuing through life in the awful condition in which they were brought into being! So far from it that they call for great compaſſion:—On Adam for eating the forbidden fruit! This cannot be, becauſe it was not poſſible for him to avoid it. I ſhall leave it then to the defenders of the hypotheſis to ſay where it *ought* to be placed, and proceed.

8th. Neceſſity and Predeſtination are alike, as on both principles the reprobates ſuffer in hell without cauſe, for doing the unfruſtrable will of God, and what he fore-ordained they ſhould do, or rather becauſe it is his pleaſure they ſhould ſuffer.

9th. According to Neceſſity and Predeſtination, all the particulars mentioned originate in God.

10th. Neceſſity and Predeſtination repreſent God as the author of ſin.

Mr. Crombie honeſtly and frankly tells us, "That according to Neceſſity the deity is the "cauſe not only of all the virtue, but likewiſe "of all the vice which *is*, *has been*, or *ever will* "*exiſt*." p. 137. i. e. as appears from other parts of his Eſſay, God hath for wiſe and good ends, ſo diſpoſed the ſtate of events, as that vice neceſſarily follows.

And Mr. Jonathan Edwards ſays, "If by the "author of ſin is meant the permitter, or not "hinderer of ſin, and at the ſame time, a diſ-"poſer of the ſtate of events in ſuch a manner "for wiſe, holy, and moſt excellent ends and "purpoſes, that ſin, if it be permitted, or not "hindered, will moſt certainly and infallibly "follow. I ſay, if this be all is meant by the "author of ſin, I do not deny *that God is the*

"*author of ſin.*" Enquiry, p. 357. Though Neceſſity and Predeſtination, as allowed by Mr. Crombie and Mr. Edwards, repreſent God to be the author of ſin—according to my view both principles annihilate ſin. Having ſhewn in the Strictures that ſin can have no exiſtence on the neceſſarian principle, I ſhall now confine my views chiefly to predeſtination. The Bible informs us that ſin is the tranſgreſſion of the law, and throughout holds it to view as what ought to be avoided, as a thing that is wrong, as a crime, and the ſinner as criminal, and juſtly deſerving puniſhment But if it is the unfruſtrable will of God that all things ſhould be juſt as they have been, are, and will be, and he hath fore-ordained whatſoever comes to paſs; and if, as Mr. Edwards repreſents, God hath diſpoſed the ſtate of events attendant on man in ſuch a manner as that ſin, or what is ſo called, muſt inevitably follow, unleſs prevented by himſelf; and it were not his pleaſure to prevent it, which it was not: "And all events, evil as well "as good, in the world, are ordered by infinite "wiſdom." Enquiry Freedom of Will, p. 305, 367. And if as Mr. Rowles aſſerts, every event attendant on creation is the voluntary effort of the divine will, I ſay, if ſo, all events, it is ſufficient to my preſent purpoſe to ſay, all human actions originate in God, and proceed from him, are juſt what he would have them to be, and what he cauſeth them to be: and men are only inſtruments in his hands, or mere machines invincibly impelled by him to act in every reſpect juſt as they do, ſo that they cannot act otherwiſe. How then can ſin poſſibly exiſt as a thing that is wrong—that is a crime, and man be

criminal and deſerving puniſhment, or even blame!

Mr. Edwards talks of men being left of God, that they never ſin but when they are left of him, and that they neceſſarily ſin when they are left, and ſo conſiders ſin as ariſing from men, and not from God. Ibid. p. 365. But if ſin exiſt in conſequence of God's diſpoſing the ſtate of events in the manner he hath; if men's volitions and actions are determined, and produced by the ſtrongeſt motives created and appointed by God, ſo to influence men, they are as really impelled by God as they would were he to determine and produce their volitions and actions by his immediate influence. I juſt notice further, that Mr. E. ſuppoſes God wills and orders the exiſtence of moral evil not for the ſake of what it is in itſelf, but with a view to a good end. p. 367. Doubtleſs he means with a view to redemption, the redemption of the Elect. But as ſin cannot exiſt on his principle, it cannot be that God ever willed and ordered any human actions with a view to redemption. For if there be no ſin, there can be no redemption from it, nor forgiveneſs of it. On the whole, I obſerve, that there being ſo great an affinity between Neceſſity and Predeſtination, with regard to every thing of importance reſpecting this life, as that both principles are nearly, if not altogether, one and the ſame; the conſequences which ariſe from the one, ariſe from the other; and the arguments which militate againſt Neceſſity are in force againſt Predeſtination.

But I have been exerciſing my reaſon, and reaſon is decried and things believed by the decriers of reaſon which will not ſtand the teſt of reaſon nor revelation. Yet truth and true reli-

gion are poſſeſſed only by the decriers of your reaſoners, and ſuch as are convinced of its being their duty not to continue, without examination, in the belief of what they were educated, (in the belief of, and what they had been taught by) creeds, catechiſms, and dogmatizers; but to employ the powers God hath given them impartially to ſeek truth, and to believe on proper evidence; and who ſincerely pray for divine aſſiſtance: and on ſeeing reaſon from the Bible to relinquiſh, at leaſt, ſome of their former ſentiments, and to embrace others, follow the dictates of their judgment and conſcience at the hazard of every thing with regard to men, theſe I ſay, though real belivers in Jeſus Chriſt, and patterns of virtue, benevolence and piety, are ſad heretics, and in a graceleſs ſtate; and ſo living and dying will, muſt be damned. Ah! what bigotry, cenſoriouſneſs, and miſtaken zeal may occupy the human mind! "I am not to "be judged of men's judgment." *Paul.*—The time cometh when he that killeth you thinketh he doth God ſervice. *Jeſus Chriſt.*

But I proceed to obſerve, that though Neceſſity and Predeſtination bear ſo great an affinity to each other reſpecting men in this ſtate, yet they differ widely with regard to the final iſſue of the non-elect, as the former delivers them all from future ſuffering, and conveys them to everlaſting happineſs, when their vicious habits are reformed; but the latter leaves them to ſuffer without end. And here Neceſſity triumphs over Predeſtination, or rather would were the hypotheſis properly ſupported. But both, in my opinion, are unfounded. The Bible aſſerts that "fornicators, adulterers, and other characters, "ſhall not inherit the kingdom of God." 1 Cor.

vi. 9, 10. The parable of the talents, Matt. 25. repreſents the tranſactions of the general judgment. The talents I conceive to be means of moral improvement poſſeſſed in this life; and as the ſlothful ſervant was, or will be, deprived of the talent he neglected, and himſelf caſt into outer darkneſs, I conclude there will be no means of moral improvement in hell. And our Lord ſaith, John ix. 4. "The night cometh "when no man can work." And in Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. We are told, if they who were once enlightened, &c. fall, it is impoſſible to renew them again to repentance." Other ſcriptures there are which repreſent, that the wicked will be conſumed like chaff, with unquenchable fire —that they will be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction. And in Heb. x. 26, 27. "That if "we ſin wilfully after that we have received the "knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no "more ſacrifice for ſin: but a certain fearful "looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, "which ſhall devour the adverſaries."

The Predeſtinarian doctrine of perpetual puniſhment is of all doctrines the moſt diſhonorable to God. "A friend, ſome time ſince, informed "me, he had been a ſpectator" to the puniſhment inflicted on a culprit by flogging, that prior to the appointed number of ſtripes being completed, his proſecutor ſtanding by, though not the beſt of characters, was ſo much moved, that he cried hold. But not ſo with regard to God! No. For he can himſelf puniſh, not one for a few minutes only, but millions and millions even of his own offspring, and that eternally—without end! And without being moved! Yes, and for what they never could avoid, for doing what was his unfruſtrable will, and he fore-ordained they

ſhould do; or more properly becauſe it is his ſovereign pleaſure to do it! A doctrine this horrid beyond deſcription! A doctrine ſufficiently awful to ſhock the moſt inhuman of human kind! A doctrine which repreſents the beſt of beings as a partial tyrant! But it is a doctrine, I with pleaſure ſubjoin, which, though believed by ſome worthy characters, is, I am perſuaded, after many years cloſe and repeated examination, repugnant to the tenor of the Bible, and the moral character of its great Author, who is ſo far from being a partial tyrant, that he is the God of love—love itſelf—is merciful, good, full of compaſſion, and very pitiful; who taketh no pleaſure in the death of a ſinner, but that he repent and live. Yet to ſuch as perſeveringly reject the Savior, and reſiſt the Spirit; who will not be awed by terror, nor attracted by love, to the finally impenitent he is, and will be, a conſuming fire!

I ſhall now ſtate Predeſtination as believed by the Mahometans.

"The ſixth great point which the Mohammedans are taught by the Koran to believe, is, "God's abſolute decree and predeſtination, both "of good and evil. For the orthodox doctrine "is, that whatever hath or ſhall come to paſs in "this world, whether it be good or whether it "be bad, proceedeth entirely from the divine "will, and is irrevocably fixed and recorded "from all eternity in the preſerved table; God "having ſecretly predetermined, not only the "adverſe and proſperous fortune of every perſon in this world, in the moſt minute particulars, but alſo his faith or infidelity, his "obedience or diſobedience, and conſequently

"his everlaſting happineſs or miſery after "death; which fate or predeſtination it is "not poſſible by any foreſight or wiſdom to "avoid."—Sale's Preliminary Diſcourſe to his Engliſh Verſion of the Koran, ſect. 4th, p. 103. quarto edition.

With reſpect, I remain,

FROME, DEAR SIR, yours,

1799. J. G.

*FINIS.*

# STRICTURES

ON A WORK ENTITLED

AN ESSAY

ON PHILOSOPHICAL NECESSITY,

*By ALEXANDER CROMBIE.*

THESE STRICTURES ARE COMPRISED IN

THREE LETTERS,

ADDRESSED TO

*The REV. T. TWINING.*

TO WHICH IS ADDED

AN APPENDIX,

shewing in various particulars the affinity there is between

NECESSITY AND PREDESTINATION.

*By JOHN COLLEDGE.*

"To the law and to the teſtimony—if they ſpeak not according to this word, it is becauſe there is no light in them."

ISAIAH.

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On the DEATH threatened againſt ADAM in caſe of Diſobedience:—On the EXTENT of SALVATION:—And on PREDESTINATION.—Alſo, Strictures on a Pamphlet entitled "A Serious Addreſs to the profeſſors of Chriſtianity," &c. and on Mr. S. ROWLES's Defence of Neceſſity and Reprobation.

THE WHOLE COMPRISED IN

THREE LETTERS TO A FRIEND.

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# LETTER I.

Rev. and dear SIR,

IN conſequence of your requeſt, I have paid attention to Mr. ALEXANDER CROMBIE'S treatiſe on philoſophical neceſſity, and now preſent you with a few ſtrictures on it. Mr. CROMBIE, after ſtating the argument and defining terms in ſection 1, gives his idea in ſection 2,—of the cauſes of action, which in p. 11---12, he ſums up in theſe words: "I think it obvious, "then, that the immediate cauſe of every action "is a volition correſpondent thereto; that this "volition is occaſioned by ſome uneaſineſs which "the mind feels in certain circumſtances, and "that this uneaſineſs proceeds from the claims "of paſſion or appetite craving indulgence, ſo "that every volition is ultimately reſolvable "into the influence of the pathetic principles "of our nature. This influence, it is to be "obſerved, may be controuled and directed by "the faculty of reaſon, which, though it doth "not prompt to act, regulates and governs our "mode of acting." And p. 14, he ſays, "Every "action originates in the reſtleſsneſs of ſome "one paſſion or appetite."

That ſome volitions are occaſioned by uneaſineſs of mind, is admitted; but not that all are.

I am ſitting in my houſe, meditating with great pleaſure, on the moſt delightful of all ſubjects—the love of God to a guilty world, to myſelf. My pious friend comes in, I chooſe to ask him to be ſeated--I chooſe to communicate my meditations to him—I chooſe to love God—I chooſe to praiſe him, &c. &c. Theſe volitions by no means proceed from uneaſineſs of mind, for I feel none at the time, but all pleaſure and joy. Nor does every action originate in the appetites and paſſions. Millions and millions are produced by perſonal diſorders, inundations, earthquakes, wars, &c. A perſon of eminence is ſeized with an awful fever; this produces various actions in himſelf, his nurſe, phyſician, apothecary, and thoſe who hear of it, which otherwiſe would not have exiſted. But though Mr. C. here aſſerts that every action originates in the appetites and paſſions, he tells us, p. 110---111, "The object preſented has "been called the external motive; the affection "excited by it, the internal. The former "generates in the mind a certain emotion, this "begets a correſpondent volition to gratify the "emotion—the volition is followed by the "act."

According to this, all actions thus produced muſt originate, not in the appetites and paſſions, but in the objects preſented, called by himſelf, in p. 3, "the external motives." P. 11---12, "Theſe appetites and paſſions are part of him-"ſelf, nay, I may ſay the man himſelf; for "without theſe he is nothing." Now if the appetites and paſſions are the man himſelf, or only part of him, and all his actions, or but ſome of them, originate in the appetites and paſſions, they originate in himſelf, conſequently

he *produces his own actions*;—actuates himſelf. Yet Mr. C. contends, p. 88, and onwards, that man cannot act without being acted upon. But though in the paſſage juſt cited he repreſents man as being all appetite and paſſion, as though he had no ſoul, yet p. 153, he ſays, "you can-"not abſtract the ſoul and leave the man." He tells, p. 12, "Reaſon doth not prompt to ac-"tion;" yet in p. 154, he informs us, "it doth "prompt us to action." How then ſhall we conclude from this incorrect and contradictory repreſentation? That every action originates in the appetites and paſſions, or in external objects, or in both!—That man actuates himſelf, or that he cannot act without being acted upon!—That he is all appetite and paſſion, and has no ſoul, or that together with theſe, he has a ſoul!—That reaſon does not prompt to action, or that it does! Leaving Mr. C. to adjuſt the above, I ſhall in a brief way preſent you with my own views of the theory of human action, which you will conſider as general, and that to it ſome particulars may be exceptions.

Man does not conſiſt of qualities, nor of appetites and paſſions only, but is a material ſubſtantial being. Saying that the ſoul is an immaterial ſubſtance, is void of ſenſe; ſaying it is not a ſubſtance, is void of truth. For that which is not a ſubſtance, is a nonentity, and a nonentity is incapable of reaſoning, perceiving, &c. But the ſoul is capable of perceiving, reaſoning, reflecting, &c.; therefore not a nonentity, but a ſubſtance. All the appetites and paſſions are powers poſſeſſed by man, to be employed and exerciſed towards proper objects, at proper times, and in proper degrees, at the command, and under the controul of reaſon. Man being

formed for action, is placed amidſt a variety of objects, which prompt him to action. Theſe objects are preſented to the mind through the medium of the ſenſes; the underſtanding perceives them: thoſe perceptions which are produced by objects expected, are voluntary—thoſe produced by objects not expected, are involuntary.

On ſome objects being perceived by the underſtanding, reaſon begins to act. Thus you viſit your friend, and finding him languid, you adviſe him to take a ride on horſeback; he perceives the object, and then reaſons concerning it: if he conclude it proper, the volition and action follow; otherwiſe not. On objects being perceived, the paſſions inſtantly ariſe, reaſon then inveſtigates. If the objects and actions appear proper, they are choſen, and correſpondent paſſions promoted; otherwiſe they are rejected, and the paſſion ſubdued. Thus an object is preſented, which appears to the underſtanding in an amiable form; love ariſes: reaſon then inveſtigates the object; if it be found worthy and ſuitable, it is embraced, and the paſſion cheriſhed; otherwiſe it is rejected, and the paſſion conquered. You are walking from home in a duſky evening, perceive an object at ſome diſtance, ſeemingly terrific; your fear ariſes: you then reaſon, examine the object, and finding you were miſtaken, your fear ſubſides. You are informed your neighbour has traduced your character; your reſentmen is exci ed, and ſays retaliate; but your reaſon being taught by chriſtianity, ſaith no, but rather do him good. You will obſerve, I have been ſpeaking of thoſe who properly exerciſe reaſon. With regard to thoſe who do not, the proceſs is nearly the ſame,

what reſpects reaſon excepted, which not being properly exerted and employed, friendly objects and actions are neglected, and their oppoſites, promiſing preſent gratification, are embraced.

Mr. C. in ſection 3, treating of the influence of motives, ſays p. 14, "As every action "originates in the reſtleſſneſs of ſome one paſ- "ſion or appetite, and is to be conſidered as an "effect generated by this motive or active prin- "ciple as a cauſe, that cauſe muſt act neceſſarily "and uniformly. It can produce no other than "its own proper effect." And p. 25, "I think "it demonſtrable, that the internal principles "of action, the paſſions, ſentiments, appetites, "and affections, in the human mind, inſtead of "owing their ſtrength to the mind itſelf, are "mechanically invigorated and weakened in a "variety of ways, in which proceſs the mind "is entirely paſſive." And p. 26, "If theſe "principles of action, inſtead of acting on the "mind, were themſelves governed by it, moral "diſcipline, as I ſhall afterwards ſhew, would "be uſeleſs and abſurd."

He adds, "It is evident then, I conceive, "that our actions are governed by the pre- "dominant motives, and that their influence, "ſo far from being dependent on the determi- "nation of the will, regulate and govern the "will itſelf." Here we behold the mind—the intelligent—the principal part of man—the moſt noble part of creation, which is capable of ſurveying paſt, preſent, and future,—exploring the remote countries of the earth—ranging the heavens—contemplating the Moſt High, and communing with him,—here I ſay, we behold this dignified part of man exhibited as a paſſive inſignificant ſomething! neceſſarily governed,

together with the will, by the influence of appetite, paſſion, &c. and the whole man a complete piece of machinery! But let us pay attention to the ſubject.

The appetites are not ſituated in the mind, but in the body. And their operations, though they may be mechanical, are under the direction and controul of the mind. Thus the appetite of hunger may be invigorated by a perſon riding early and frequently in healthful air, and weakened by intemperance. When hungry, he may indulge his appetite inſtantly, or poſtpone it for ſome time; when eating may gratify it fully, or but in part, &c. &c. The paſſions of the mind are not firſt in their operations, but ſubſequent to, and in conſequence of, objects beings perceived by the underſtanding. The paſſions, not being intelligent exiſtences, only powers poſſeſſed by the mind, are as incapable of receiving an addreſs from any object, as the fingers or toes of the body. Nor can they be immediately ſtrengthened, weakened, nor influenced, by any thing external. Were you to ſtand behind a man totally deaf, and addreſs him in the moſt pleaſing, and the moſt irritating language, his paſſions would remain unmoved; his underſtanding not perceiving your ideas. But addreſs the ſame language to a perſon poſſeſſing the ſenſe of hearing, his underſtanding would perceive the meaning, and correſpondent paſſions be excited. No one ever loved, hated, deſired, hoped for, nor feared an object, not firſt perceived nor thought of by the mind, conſequently it cannot be that any action originates in the paſſions.

I have ſhewn before, in p. 6, that the paſſions are invigorated, weakened, and governed by reaſon, in thoſe who act in character.

Sentiments are no part of man, nor naturally inherent in him, but acquired. When he comes into being he has no ſentiments; when matured, ſentiments are acquired by the mind, ſtrengthened by increaſe of evidence, and weakened by a decreaſe of evidence, as diſcovered by the mind.

But the neceſſary influence of motives, it ſhould ſeem, is eſſential, not only to the exiſtence of actions, but of moral good and evil. For, ſays our author, p. 18, "As it is the motive "alone, from which any action proceeds, that "conſtitutes its worth, or fixes its criminality, "if actions are not the neceſſary effects of mo-"tives, they are neither morally good nor "morally evil."

Appetites, paſſions, and external objects, by Mr. C. called motives, can no more, abſtractedly conſidered from reaſon, conſtitute the actions of a man, moral or immoral, than they can the actions of a horſe. By the influence of motives, muſt be meant invincible influence, otherwiſe nothing more is contended for, than a libertarian is ready to grant. But ſuch influence is ſo far from being eſſential to the exiſtence of moral good and evil, that it deſtroys both. If I am invincibly impelled to act, that action, of whatever kind, is not mine, but the agent's. Actions, to be properly my own, muſt be performed voluntarily, free from force. An action in itſelf bad, cannot be made otherwiſe by the reaſon of the agent for performing it, be it what it may. An action in itſelf good, partakes not of moral excellence, if the reaſon of the agent for performing it is bad. The object prompting to action, the action performed, and the reaſon of the agent for per-

forming it, are diſtinct. Man being an intelligent creature of God, capable of knowing him, and underſtanding his requiſitions, and as ſuch owing obedience to him, his actions, in order to partake of moral excellence, muſt be ſuch as God hath commanded; muſt be believed by the agent to be ſuch; muſt be performed with an eye to God, becauſe he hath commanded them, and in obedience to his high authority.

And this is not confined to acts of devotion, but extends to the common acts of life. We are commanded to do good; the underſtanding perceives it. The ſchoolmaſter reaſons, or ought to reaſon thus: educating youth is doing good; the huſbandman thus—attending to the labor of the field is doing good to myſelf, family, and others, therefore we will do it. And this can be done by reaſon only. Appetites, paſſions, and external objects, are incapable of effecting it: reaſons for acting ariſe from reaſon. "Whether "ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to "the glory of God." *Paul.* The ſelf-determining power in man, as it is called, is repreſented as at variance with moral culture, the divine preſcience, and moral government of God. And our author hath thought proper to place this power in the will, p. 50. And elſewhere he is pleaſed to hold the will to view as *ſupreme*, *arbitrary*, *lawleſs*, &c. And p. 432, he ſaith, "A libertarian believes, that all ac-"tions are aſcribable to the ſupreme and ſole "determination of the human will." But inſtead of believing him in poſſeſſion of authority thus to aſſert, I rather think he does the libertarian injuſtice and treats him unfairly. Mr. Jonathan Edwards, ſpeaking of the ſubject ſays, "I ſhall ſuppoſe that the Arminians, when they

"ſpeak of the will determining itſelf, do by "the will mean the ſoul willing. I ſhall ſup- "poſe this to be their meaning, becauſe nothing "elſe can be meant, without the groſſeſt and "plaineſt abſurdity." *Enquiry into freedom of will*, p. 45. It is evident that the will is not an intelligent exiſtence, but a *power* in man, as really as the power of moving the tongue; and that it is not the will that chooſes, but the mind. Man being accountable, his volitions muſt be free. The Deity not only poſſeſſes intelligence, but ability to act, without being impelled to act by any object whatever, otherwiſe, being immutable, he could not have acted prior to the exiſtence of all other beings. Man he created in his own image, that is, intelligent, with powers capable of acting, without being invincibly acted on. Nor does this repreſent men as Gods, nor as independent, but as creatures of God, dependent on him inceſſantly, even for the continuance of their exiſtence. I contend then, that the operations, reaſonings, determinations, and volitions of the mind, and the actions proceeding from it, are free. Mr. C. ſpeaking of moral culture, ſays, "After he "(the chriſtian preacher) had extirpated, I ſhall "ſuppoſe, every evil propenſity, and had firmly "eſtabliſhed the uncontroled predominance of "pious affections and virtuous motives in their "hearts, the ſelf-determining will on which the "conduct is ſaid to depend, is juſt as it was." p. 55. Is this the reaſoning of a philoſopher! what! every evil propenſity extirpated, and the uncontrolable predominance of pious affections and virtuous motives in the heart firmly eſtabliſhed! and yet the will remain juſt as it was prior to the renovation!! What! the mind hate

and avoid evil, and embrace good, and at the ſame time refuſe and reject the latter, and chooſe the former! Can Mr. C. produce an inſtance of this kind? or can he prove even the poſſibility of it? Does not the univerſal experience of all whoſe minds are renewed teſtify againſt this ſtrange ſort of logic? Is it not their uniform language, It is our will to be more holy, more devout, &c. and our grief that we are not? And is not their language in perfect harmony with that of the Apoſtle, Gal. v. 17. Rom. vii. 18—24? But I diſmiſs the abſurdity with juſt obſerving, that moral culture is, on the principle of liberty, both practicable and proper, but on that of neceſſity, the greateſt exertions of pious parents, and the united efforts of chriſtian miniſters to renew the mind will prove futile, unleſs the renovation be decreed by heaven, and the means accompanied with invincible influence, and the unrenewed will remain excuſable, ſo as not to be juſtly blamed by any, no not by God himſelf.

But liberty is ſaid to be incompatible with the divine preſcience. Our author conceives, and with reverence pronounces it "impoſſible for "even infinite wiſdom to foreknow free actions, "and aſſerts that preſcience implies neceſſity." p. 71, 74. But is he certain that he is right? Does he not conſider himſelf fallible like other men, and that poſſibly he might be miſtaken? Does he forget the lips of truth inform us "that "that which is impoſſible with men is poſſible "with God," and fact in a variety of inſtances proves it? But let us examine the ſubject on both principles. I ſtate that human actions are produced by the free *perceptions*, *reasonings*, *determinations* and *volitions* of the mind. Mr. C. tells us, that every action "originates in the reſt-

" leſſneſs of ſome one paſſion or appetite, and is " to be conſidered as an effect generated by this mo- " tive or active principle as a cauſe." p. 14. The paſſions are ſometimes active, at other times not. In different perſons they operate in very different, and ſometimes in very improbable ways. Love in ſome fixes on objects which are to others objects of averſion. Hope cheers ſome perſons who have reaſon to be ſad; but refuſes to cheer others who have reaſon to be joyful. Fear influences ſome to fly from a mouſe, and to tremble at the ſight of a ſpider; whilſt it refrains to admoniſh others in real danger. Oppoſite paſſions in the ſame perſon militate againſt each other. Now this prevails, and then that. The appetites ſometimes crave for indulgence and are gratified, and then they are denied, &c. Now is it not as difficult to conceive how the Deity could foreknow when and in what ways the paſſions and appetites in the many millions of his creatures would operate; when their claims would be indulged, and when controled; and what actions would be produced by them; as it is to conceive how he could foreknow the various operations of the mind, and what actions would certainly be produced by them? But did the libertarian believe human actions to originate in the will, would there be greater abſurdity in it than there is in believing they originate in the paſſions? Is not the will as intelligent and active as the paſſions are? And are not actions ariſing from the former as certain, as rational, moral, and immoral, and as poſſible to be foreknown by the Deity as thoſe ariſing from the latter? But as Mr. C. tells us, p. 111, " The external object generates in the mind a " certain emotion which begets a correſpondent

" volition to gratify the emotion, and that the " volition is followed by action," we will ſuppoſe his real ſentiment to be, that only ſome of our actions originate in the paſſions and appetites, the reſt in external objects. According to this ſentiment, actions become cauſes of actions in innumerable inſtances. His Britannic Majeſty viſits Weymouth : This action produces ten thouſand actions in others. One hundred thouſand perſons occupying different towns are apprized of it. One hundred of them repair to the ſame place on the occaſion. According to our author are impelled. But the king's action being extrinſically the ſame to each of the hundred thouſand, can Mr. C. tell how God could from all eternity know that it would invincibly influence the hundred only, any more than we can tell how he could foreknow the operations of their minds would be ſuch as would certainly produce the actions performed by them? Should it be ſaid, the invincible influence of the motive on the hundred was owing to their ſtate of mind being different from the others, the queſtion returns, Is it not as difficult to conceive how the Deity could foreknow their ſtate of mind at this time, as he could foreknow the operation of the mind? Should it be further ſaid, " their ſtate of mind was produced by their " paſſions," the queſtion again returns, and the difficulty remains the ſame.

But Mr. C. ſuppoſes there muſt be a neceſſary connection between every cauſe and effect, in order for God to foreknow the effect, p. 72, 73. and tells us, p. 431, " A neceſſarian believes that " every event is præordained by infinite wiſdom " and unlimitted goodneſs, and that preſcience is " truly nothing but predetermination." According to this hypotheſis, God is himſelf the ſole

cauſe—and all events and created cauſes, or what our author improperly conſiders as cauſes, are ſtrictly ſpeaking effects produced by him who is the *abſolute* and *only cauſe* of all effects. And if he be the abſolute cauſe of all, he is the abſolute cauſe of all evil, moral as well as phyſical—even of the blackeſt and moſt horrid crimes that are committed, though throughout the Bible he commands men to avoid moral evil, and to his commands annexes awful threatenings againſt thoſe who violate his commands, and hath, in various inſtances, poured his judgments on tranſgreſſors even in this world.

But can it be right thus diſhonorably to think of that Being who is rectitude itſelf? What! the moſt holy of all the cauſe of unholineſs! What! the beſt of all beings the abſolute cauſe of the worſt of crimes! What! a wiſe, juſt, and merciful God, command men to avoid moral evil, yet cauſe them to commit it, and then pour his judgments on them for what he obliged them to do! But ſo it is on our author's hypotheſis, and ſo it muſt be, unleſs God be capable of knowing future events on the principle of liberty.

I have already obſerved that Mr. C. repreſents *preſcience* as being *predetermination*, and that it is truly nothing but predetermination, yet, p. 64, he calls it a *divine attribute*, and p. 67 and on, he ſpeaks of it as being foreknowledge, or a foreſight of future events; (ſuch is the conſiſtence of our author): The latter I conceive to be juſt, the two former remote from truth. Foreknowledge, or a foreſight of future events, being diſtinct from the act of predetermining their exiſtence, and from the attribute or faculty by which they are foreſeen. The knowledge of the divine preſci-

ence we derive from the Bible only; for without Revelation it could not have been known that it exiſts; and if we admit its exiſtence on the authority of the Bible, it is juſt that we ſhould admit what the ſame book aſſerts concerning the point before us.

Now the Bible no where tells us that preſcience implies neceſſity, but in a variety of places evidently declares the contrary by aſſerting human liberty: For where liberty exiſts neceſſity cannot. Benhadad God appointed to utter deſtruction, and blamed Ahab and deprived him of life for not deſtroying him. Mr. C. by telling us that all events are pre-ordained by God, tells us he pre-ordained that Ahab ſhould ſpare Benhadad, but God, by telling us he appointed him to utter deſtruction, and by blaming and depriving Ahab of life for not deſtroying him, tells us he did not pre-ordain that Ahab ſhould ſpare him. Leaving our author to adjuſt theſe propoſitions, I aſk, did God cauſe Ahab to ſpare Benhadad? What! appoint him to be utterly deſtroyed, yet preſerve him by cauſing Ahab to ſpare him, ſo that he could not deſtroy him, and then blame and deprive Ahab of life for not deſtroying him! How groſsly abſurd and highly diſhonorable the ſuppoſition! Rather is it not undeniably evident that Ahab was an agent and poſſeſſed power not only to ſpare Benhadad but to have deſtroyed him? Otherwiſe blaming and depriving him of life would have been altogether unjuſt. It follows, that God foreknew this event on the principle of liberty, and that preſcience does not imply neceſſity. A vaſt number of other ſcriptures might be produced which aſſert human liberty; but as I purpoſe bringing ſome of theſe to view after, I ſhall only obſerve further here, the Bible informs us that man is an accoun-

table being—that he is to be accountable to God, that he is the ſubject of praiſe, blame, rewards and puniſhment; that he hath ſinned, and that God ſaves from and pardons ſin. But on the neceſſarian principle theſe things cannot be true, as will be evinced in my next. It muſt be then, that if preſcience imply neceſſity, theſe things are not true; or that if they are true, preſcience does not imply neceſſity. But even God himſelf abſolutely aſſures us they are true, I therefore conclude preſcience doth not imply neceſſity, and that God is capable of foreſeeing future events on the principle of liberty.

Mr. C. further aſſerts "that on the principle "of liberty moral government is impoſſible." p. 244. But were not human actions known to God till performed, he would then be capable of governing the world, of continuing mankind in being, giving them laws, rewarding the obedient, offering pardon to ſuch as returned to their allegiance, affording them moral aids to enable them to return, making ſuch happy as did ſo, and puniſhing at pleaſure thoſe who did not. In the page laſt cited our author ſaith — "I may challenge any libertarian to ſhew conſiſtently with his own ſyſtem how the Deity can rule the mind of man ſo as either to reſtrain from vice or lead to virtue." Our reply is, by moral influence. But on the neceſſarian principle it is not poſſible to effect it in any way whatever, for according to that principle virtue and vice have no exiſtence, and the mind cannot poſſibly be led from nor to a non-entity.

But it not being my intention to notice all the objections advanced by our author againſt liberty, I ſhall cloſe this addreſs by giving you reaſon to

expect I ſhall in my next call your attention to that which is of the utmoſt importance in the debate: and with reſpect remain,

DEAR SIR,

*Yours.*

## LETTER II.

DEAR SIR,

THE principal and determining point between the neceſſarian and the libertarian being, whether human actions are neceſſary or free; I ſhall in this addreſs confine my attention more particularly to it. Mr. Crombie tells, p. 258 — "The doctrine of neceſſity maintains "that there is only one agent in nature; that all "our actions are primarily aſcribable to him; "and that every event which takes place reſults "from his ordination and appointment." — P. 13, he ſays — "Neceſſity aſcribes every event "to the Supreme being as its great and original "cauſe; and teaches that all other agents are "merely inſtruments in his hands. Hence it fol-"lows that the Deity is the cauſe not only of all "the virtue but likewiſe of all the vice which is, "has been, or ever will exiſt." — And p. 263, "he (the neceſſarian) believes that the piety of "Daniel and the perfidy of Judas aroſe neceſſa-"rily from the ſituation in which their maker "originally placed them."

So that according to our author all human actions are unavoidably neceſſary. But this the libertarian denies and contends that they are free; which is right can be determined by the Bible only — a book, which is by libertarians, believed to be of divine origin, and according to the neceſſarian *muſt* be ſo. For if all things originate in God, it muſt be that the Bible originates in him; and that the ſacred penmen were inſpired and impelled by him to write every ſentence and ſyllable contained in it. To this Book our author has recourſe. I will follow his example. "In ſcripture," ſays he, "the Deity is uniformly re-"preſented as directing all things by the counſel "of his own will, and fore-ordaining whatſoever "comes to paſs." p. 81. That God worketh all things according to the counſel of his own will we find in ſcripture — that he hath fore-ordained whatever comes to paſs in the Catechiſm. — It was the will of God to create man a free agent, and the counſel of his will to treat him as ſuch; and his conduct towards him is correſpondent to his will. Our author, to derive advantage from this text, muſt evince its meaning to be, (which he is incapable of doing), it was the will of God that all human actions ſhould be juſt what they are, and that he worketh all things ſo reſpecting men as that they cannot poſſibly act otherwiſe than what they do. The following paſſages he produces to ſhew the ſame events are aſcribable to God and man. "I will give you," ſays God, "a "heart to know that I am the Lord: And they "ſhall be my people, and I will be their God: "And they ſhall turn unto me with their whole "heart. I will give you a new heart — work out "your ſalvation — for it is God that worketh in "you, &c. &c." Pharoah hardened his heart:

" God hardened his heart." He adds, " It is " needleſs to multiply citations to ſhew that the " very ſame events are aſcribed at once to God " and man. In what ſenſe it may be aſked are " they aſcribable to both? A libertarian would " anſwer that they are to be attributed to the De- " ity, as he originally conferred the powers of " thinking, willing, and acting, and next, or " rather chiefly, to man, as he poſſeſſes the faculty " of freely exerciſing theſe powers." p. 83, 84. If Mr. C. will be ſo indulgent as to grant us licenſe to anſwer for ourſelves, we ſhall be quite as much obliged as by his anſwering for us, and repreſenting us as ſaying juſt what he pleaſes.

The Bible informs us not only of God's promiſing to give man a new heart, but alſo of his commanding man to create in himſelf a new heart. Ezek. xviii. By theſe figures we are to underſtand, not the creating the natural powers of man, but renovating of them after they are created and degenerated — and this is effected by God's preſenting things in their true light to the underſtanding, and by man's paying proper attention as an agent to thoſe repreſentations, ſo as to be renovated by them. By God's working in perſons to will and to do, I judge to be meant his continuing to extend his influence to them. By their working out their ſalvation, their continuing to pay attention to thoſe influences ſo as to be enabled by them to conform to the requiſitions of the Goſpel. conceiving the attention of man as an agent to the operations of God on him as neceſſary, in order for him to be renewed and enabled by them to conform to the requiſitions of the Goſpel by no means makes ſalvation to be of works: for man having ſinned and being loſt, the idea of his being ſaved in any way but by grace is

*unscriptural*, *unphilosophical*, and in the nature of things impoſſible. But though men are not ſaved for conforming to the requiſitions of the Goſpel, yet it is evident from the Bible that it is not the pleaſure of God to ſave them without it.

Mr. C. ſays, "Events are only immediately "aſcribable to the will of man, and ultimately to "be referred to the divine agency. For they are "in theſe paſſages ſaid to reſult from human voli-"tions and voluntary agency, while theſe voli-"tions themſelves are attributed to the influence "and operations of the divine Being." p. 82. By the influence and operation here ſpoken of, we are to underſtand *irreſiſtible influence and operation*, ſee p. 86. But events produced by the irreſiſtible influence of God can be aſcribable to none but himſelf. Telling us they reſult from human volitions, and therefore are immediately aſcribable to the will of man, and telling us at the ſame time that theſe volitions are produced by irreſiſtible influence is trifling. That men are not obliged to embrace religion contrary to their wills; that they chooſe to embrace it is readily allowed; but their being, according to the doctrine of irreſiſtibility unavoidably *impelled* to chooſe it, their volitions are no more free than the beats of the pendulum of a clock; and if their views, volitions, and actions, are produced by irreſiſtible influence, men are nothing more in religion than inſtruments. This indeed our author acknowledges, p. 137. But religious characters, as well as others, are to be judged. "We, ſays an apoſtle, including himſelf and brethren, "muſt all appear before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it

be good or bad." From which it is evident, they are not irreſiſtibly impelled to act, but agents acting freely. For the idea of judging an inſtrument, a mere machine, is not only abſurd, but abſurdity itſelf. Beſides, according to this doctrine, thoſe who have lived long in ſin prior to their renovation have reaſon to ſay, "It was owing "to God's not extending his irreſiſtible influence "to us before that we ſpent ſo many years in ir- "religion and vice;" and thoſe who after being renovated become inſenſible to the power of religion, and attend the preaching and other means of grace without profiting, may ſay, "It is owing "to God's not putting irreſiſtible efficacy into "the means:" and even ſuch of them as fall into groſs immoralities, and continue in the practice for ſome time, may ſay, "It is owing to God "withholding his irreſiſtible influence from us:" and all who live and die unrenewed, may in a future ſtate of torment juſtly ſay, "It was owing to "God's not extending his irreſiſtible influence to "us that we were not renewed and ſaved." So that all by this doctrine are rendered excuſable. But blame exiſts, and the Bible places it not on *God* but *Man*. "All the day long I have ſtretched "forth my hands to a diſobedient and gainſaying "people." "Ye will not come to me that ye "might have life." "O Jeruſalem how often "would I have gathered you, but ye would not" —"Ye do always reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt"—"O "thou wicked and ſlothful ſervant"—"Ye have "forſaken me"—"God ſent his Son to bleſs you "in turning away every one of you from his ini- "quity."—"This is the condemnation, that light "is come into the world, and men love darkneſs "rather than light," &c. &c. By God's hardening the heart, nothing more can be meant than

his withholding his moral influences, after his prior influences had been perſeveringly reſiſted, and leaving man to himſelf. Were God in a direct and abſolute way to harden the heart, man would not be culpable. But Mr. C. after allowing that on the neceſſarian principle the Deity is the cauſe of "all the vice which *is*, ever *was*, and "ever *will* exiſt," p. 137, tells us, with a view perhaps to bring his opponents into the ſame embarraſſment with himſelf reſpecting the exiſtence of moral evil, "that permiſſion is the ſame as ordination:"—"As therefore," ſays he, "the pow-"ers of body and mind by which every agent is "capacitated to do good or commit evil are ulti-"mately aſcribable to the Deity, and as their ope-"rations were foreſeen by him, I muſt contend, "that in the divine Being, ordination and permiſ-"ſion are one and the ſame." p. 140. God's creating the powers of man and foreſeeing their operations by no means prove ordination and permiſſion to be one and the ſame thing: nor can it be proved any way whatever. For ordination and permiſſion are ſo manifeſtly diſtinct and oppoſite, that both cannot exiſt. Permiſſion means nothing more than God's leaving man to the free exerciſe of his moral powers, and ſuffering him to commit moral evil. But ordination means that he appointed and unalterably fixed all human actions, ſo that the moſt attrocious crimes committed by men are unavoidable.

Permiſſion repreſents man as an agent, ordination as an inſtrument. Man being according to permiſſion an agent, is a proper ſubject to be judged; but being, according to ordination, only an inſtrument—a mere machine, can no more be a proper ſubject to be judged than a watch or a windmill.

Man's ſin, according to permiſſion, is juſtly chargeable on himſelf, and he is deſerving of blame and puniſhment ; but according to ordination, being only a machine, the foulest crimes he commits cannot be laid to his charge, nor can the Deity himſelf juſtly puniſh, nor even blame him for any thing he does.

Man, according to permiſſion, having ſinned, needs the pardoning mercy of God ; but according to ordination he does not, having no ſin to be pardoned. There is then ſurely not only a real, but a very important difference between ordination and permiſſion. The perſon that can deny this, may tell us next there is no difference betwixt light and darkneſs. In the page laſt quoted, Mr. C. ſaith further, " If he (God) had not " willed moral evil to exiſt, he would not have " ordained the means by which it muſt exiſt, and " the ordination of the means by which it is pro- " duced, neceſſarily implies he willed its produc- " tion. But divine volition is obviouſly equiva- " lent to divine ordination." This is by no means reaſoning like a neceſſarian philoſopher ; for on that principle moral evil has no exiſtence, and if no moral evil exiſt, God never willed the means by which it muſt exiſt, nor did he ever will that it ſhould exiſt, conſequently ſaying the divine volition reſpecting its exiſtence is equivalent to the divine ordination muſt be abſurd. Repreſenting that God ordained the means by which moral evil muſt exiſt is degrading to his wiſdom, as it repreſents that he ordained means to obtain an end which was abſolutely prevented by the means he ordained ; for force, inſtead of producing moral evil, renders its exiſtence impoſſible. According to the hypotheſis of free agency, it muſt be that man was created with moral powers capable not

only of obeying but disobeying, without invincible force; that the existence of moral evil was possible, also that it was not the will of God to prevent but to permit it. For, were he by his omnipotence invincibly to restrain man from it, and to impel him to obedience, he would by so doing reduce him from an agent to a machine—destroy his own established plan, and be at variance with himself. Had God willed the existence of moral evil, as Mr. C. asserts, and ordained all human actions, and so made man a mere instrument, moral evil could not then have existed, nor can it possibly exist on any other hypothesis but that of free agency and permission. So that according to our author's own assertion, were it just, it must be that man was created a free agent, and that moral evil exists not by ordination but permission.

Mr. C. says, p. 81, 82, with regard to those scriptures which ascribe certain actions to the agency of man, it may be proved "the phraseo-"logy there employed is adopted in accommoda-"tion to popular capacity. The language of "scripture is suited to common conception. '*The Sun rises and sets.*' I presume therefore, "that when man is said in scripture to will, to "choose, and to act, these expressions are to be ta-"ken in the popular acceptation, the causes of his "willing and choosing not being considered," &c. According to this representation, men conceived of themselves as being agents, but they were as much mistaken in this as they were respecting astronomy. For instead of being agents, they were in fact only instruments; and though their conceptions were so grossly erroneous, God, instead of convincing them of their error in his

word, addreſſed them by way of accommodation in language ſuited to their conceptions, though directly oppoſite to truth. I ſhall now preſent to you ſome of thoſe ſcriptures which aſcribe agency to man, from which you may judge whether he be really an agent, or whether he be, notwithſtanding, only an inſtrument; in other words, whether human actions be neceſſary or free.

Throughout the Bible we find its great Author dehorting man from ſin, and commanding his obedience; threatening to puniſh tranſgreſſors, and promiſing to reward ſuch as conform to his requiſitions. Were it juſt to conſider theſe threatenings, commands, &c. as being invincible motives impelling men to virtue and piety, (which I by no means admit) it could be ſo but in a limitted degree, there being many who are not virtuous and pious, nor could they even on the neceſſarian principle, thus influence any but ſuch as God had ordained they ſhould. And if all mankind be merely inſtruments in the hands of God, the reward promiſed and puniſhment threatened have reſpect to none but ſuch; but inſtruments having no action of their own, have nothing to be *rewarded* or *punished* for: And the idea of God's puniſhing inſtruments for what he himſelf did by them, is altogether inconſiſtent with juſtice. The reward is promiſed to none but ſuch as are righteous in this world; but if all the human race are to be ultimately happy, as Mr. C. repreſents they are, then the reward belongs to all, and will be enjoyed by all deſcriptions: It may be juſt to add, that if the ſons of vice be invincibly impelled by God to purſue ſuch conduct as neceſſarily involves them in miſery, it muſt be according to equity that the moſt vile and

wretched on earth will be the moſt happy in heaven, and enjoy more there than the moſt virtuous to compenſate for their greater ſufferings here and in hell (if you pleaſe in purgatory) hereafter, prior to their being taken from thence to bliſs.

A few particular paſſages ſhall follow this brief ſurvey of the Bible in general. We read in Gen. Chapters 2, 3, 5, that God commanded Adam not to eat of the tree of knowledge, and threatened him with death if he did; that Adam violated the command — that God for it paſſed ſentence of death againſt him, and finally executed it. Yet according to Mr. C. it was not his will that Adam ſhould refrain, but that he ſhould eat, and he invinciby impelled him to do it ſo that he could not poſſibly avoid it. Is not this clearing Adam and charging God with inſincerity, duplicity, and injuſtice! But the libertarian hypotheſis acquits him from the awful imputation, ſupports his honor, and lays the blame on the tranſgreſſor. In Joſhua we find that Achan was commanded, with others, not to take of the ſpoils of Jericho — that he diſobeyed the command — that the anger of the Lord was kindled againſt him — that he ſuffered a part of their army to be defeated by the men of Ai — ordered the offender to be put to death, &c. Now according to Mr. C. what does this hiſtory exhibit but a ſcene of deception and cruelty. God commanded Achan not to take of the ſpoil, yet at the ſame time he choſe he ſhould, and invincibly obliged him to do it! Then he pretended to be angry, and to manifeſt his diſpleaſure by ſuffering a part of their army to be defeated and ſome of them to be ſlain by their enemies — by telling Joſhua they had broken his covenant — commanding the tranſgreſſor to be

detected and put to death, yea, even to be burnt with fire. But before the libertarian position this horrid ſcene of hypocriſy and cruelty retires!

1ſt of Samuel, 15, Saul was commanded to go and deſtroy the Amalakites and all that appertained to them; but he deviated from the command by ſparing Agag and the beſt of the Cattle, for which the kingdom was rent from him. Jer. 42, God commanded Johanon and the remnant of the people that were left in Judah not to go to Egypt: promiſed them his favor if they followed his command, and threatened them with utter deſtruction if they did not: notwithſtanding which they went down to Egypt. In both theſe places I might remark as before; but I paſs on to Jer. xliv. 4. I ſent unto them all my prophets, ſaying, "Oh do not this abominable thing that I hate!" The thing here ſpoken of was idol-worſhip, which God abſolutely prohibited, and puniſhed the idolaters with captivity for the repeated commiſſion of it. Now as he commanded them not to worſhip idols, and calls it an abominable thing, can it be right to think that it was his will they ſhould worſhip them? And as he by all his prophets publicly intreated them not to do it, can it be juſt to believe he ſecretly moved and invincibly obliged them to do it; and then puniſhed them for doing it? Should we not loudly exclaim againſt the man that is guilty of ſuch conduct and at once conclude him to be hypocritical and unjuſt? And ſhall we charge ſuch conduct on the moſt ſincere of all beings, who is rectitude itſelf? But had God neither commanded nor intreated them to avoid idolatry, can it be reaſonable to ſuppoſe the great Supreme of all, who poſſeſſes the higheſt intelligence, is jealous of his honor, and declares he

will not give his glory to another nor his praiſe to graven images, would prevent his intelligent Creatures from worſhiping himſelf; from acknowledging his ſupremacy, their ſubmiſſion to dependance on, and delight in him; and move and oblige them to form the figure of a man from the ſtock of a tree and then to fall down and worſhip it, to pray unto it, and to ſay "deliver us, for *thou* art our God?" Yet according to Mr. C. he is the author of all the idolatry, even the groſſeſt and moſt licentious that has ever been committed in the world, though through the Old and New Teſtament he prohibits it and declares by an apoſtle that idolators ſhall not inherit his kingdom. Jonah was commanded to go to Nineveh, but he went to Joppa. Did Jonah himſelf think he was impelled by God to violate the divine command? No, "They that "obſerve lying vanities," ſaith he, "forſake their own mercies." From the paſſages produced it is evident that the particular tranſgreſſors ſpoken of in them were commanded to act differently from what they did; but according to Mr. C. God ordained that their conduct ſhould be juſt what it was, and he impelled them to it, ſo that he ordained they ſhould act one way, but commanded they ſhould act the reverſe. Thus he ordained that Adam ſhould eat of the interdicted tree, but commanded him not to do it. He ordained that Saul ſhould ſpare Hagag and the beſt of the Cattle, but commanded he ſhould deſtroy them utterly; and ſo of all the reſt: Now if it were the will of God and he ordained they ſhould act juſt as they did, and he invincibly impelled them to it, can you tell me for what purpoſe it was he forbad their ſo acting, and commanded

them to act directly contrary? Not that he might have juſt occaſion to puniſh them ſurely! This more properly applies to a tyrant than to a God of infinite compaſſion and boundleſs benevolence. Beſides, puniſhing them for what he himſelf obliged them to do would be unjuſt and cruel. However according to this hppotheſis, i. e. if it is the will of God and he ordains that men ſhould violate his commands, and he obliges them to it ſo that they cannot poſſibly avoid it—it cannot be their duty to obey thoſe commands any farther than they do. But both reaſon and revelation militate againſt this hypotheſis. When an intelligent and good man commands his ſervants to avoid this and do that, is it not reaſonable to think it is his will they ſhould obey his commands? That there is a poſſibility of their doing it? and that it is their duty to do it? And is it not reaſonable ſo to think reſpecting the commands of the Moſt High? eſpecially as he threatens evil to ſuch as tranſgeſs his commands, and promiſes good to thoſe who conform to them. But the Bible is deciſive on this head. "O that thou hadſt hark-"ened to my commandments!" Iſa. xlviii. 18. Only admitting God to be ſincere in expreſſing theſe words, do they not imply it was his will that the Jews ſhould have hearkened to his commands, that there was a poſſibility of their doing it? and that it was their duty? James iii. 10. "Out of "the ſame mouth proceeds both bleſſing and cur-"ſing—theſe things ought not to be." That is, perſons ought not to violate that command which ſaith, Curſe not, but to obey it. Matt. xxiii. 23. Our Lord told the Jews they had "omitted the "weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, "and faith;" and adds, "theſe ye ought to have done." Here our infallible Redeemer aſſerts that

the very perſons who violated theſe commands ought to have conformed to them ; not that they ought in future, but that it was their duty to have done it inſtead of violating them, conſequently, in his view they were not inſtruments impelled by God to deviate from them, but agents ; and that it was poſſible and duty to have obeyed them. Matt. xxv. 27. " Thou oughteſt to have put my money to the exchangers"—It therefore was his duty, though he hid it in the earth. From theſe ſcriptures it is evident then that men are not inſtruments impelled by God to tranſgreſs his commands, but agents poſſeſſing a power to conform to them, and that it is their duty to do it. You will permit me to lay before you a few other paſſages which aſcribe agency to man. Prov. i. 24. to the end—" Becauſe ye have ſet at nought my " counſel, and would none of my reproof, I will " laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your " fear cometh," &c. &c. Does this look as though God obliged them to reject his counſel and reproof? Rather does it not repreſent them as agents, and that they might and ought to have paid attention thereto ? Iſa. i. 2. " I have nouriſhed " and brought up children, and they have rebel- " led againſt me." But had they been merely inſtruments invincibly impelled by him through the whole of their exiſtence to do his pleaſure, it would have been impoſſible for them to have rebelled againſt him : it muſt be then that they were agents. Ver. 14. " Your new moons and ap- " pointed feaſts my ſoul hateth." But if God obliged them to obſerve their new moons and appointed feaſts, or rather done it himſelf by them as inſtruments, could it be true that he hated it ? Ezek. vii. 8, 9. " I will pour out my fury upon

" thee, and will recompence thee for all thine " abominations," &c. &c. What! a juſt and merciful God pour out his fury on inſtruments, for doing what he impelled them to do, ſo that they could not avoid it! As well, and with as much reaſon might you pour out your fury upon your horſe and puniſh it cruelly for going the way you directed and obliged him to go. James i. 13. " Let no man ſay when he is tempted, I am " tempted of God; for God cannot be temp- " ted with evil, neither tempteth he any man." The obvious meaning of the laſt branch is, that God doth not ſeduce, nor do any thing to incline man to commit moral evil: certainly then it cannot be that he doth more than this—that he moves and invincibly obliges any man to do it. And men here being commanded not to ſay they are tempted to it by God, they ought not to ſay they are impelled to it by him. A variety of other paſſages might have been produced in proof of human agency, which, for the ſake of brevity, and to avoid treſpaſſing too long on your patience, I ſhall omit, and obſerve, that if God be the only agent in nature, and all other agents are merely inſtruments, or to drop Mr. C.'s ſoliciſm of God's being the only agent, and there being yet other agents, and thoſe other agents being merely inſtruments, ſee p. 137 & 258. if I ſay, God is the only agent in nature, and all men are merely inſtruments in his hands, invincibly impelled by him, every moment to act as it is his will they ſhould—the actions performed by them as inſtruments are not theirs, but ſtrictly and philoſophically his:—their being intelligent, and chooſing the actions it is the pleaſure of the agent to perform by them, by no means invalidate this propo-

ſition. For if their views, ſentiments, volitions, and actions, are all produced by invincible force, they have no action of their own, nor can they have any more than an inſtrument in the hand of an artiſt, or any piece of machinery whatever.

A neceſſarian, by telling us with a view to favor his ſentiment—that *men choose* their own actions, degrades himſelf, and trifles with his opponents; not to ſay, inſults their underſtanding: for on his principle, they have no action of their own to chooſe, and their volitions are unavoidable, both being effected by irreſiſtible force. Now, according to this hypotheſis impartially ſtated, it is clear that men are not—cannot be accountable beings—cannot be the proper ſubjects of praiſe or blame—rewards or puniſhments—there can be no ſuch thing as ſin in exiſtence—no ſalvation from ſin, nor forgiveneſs of it. For if men have no actions of their own, they have nothing to be accountable for—nothing to be praiſed or blamed—rewarded or puniſhed for. And if they are merely inſtruments, nothing but machines, they are altogether incapable of ſinning; and if they never ſinned, they do not ſtand in need of ſalvation from ſin, nor forgiveneſs of it. To talk of ſaving from and forgiving that which hath no exiſtence is void of ſenſe. So that Mr. C.'s hypotheſis deſtroys accountability, ſupercedes praiſe, blame, rewards and puniſhments—annihilates ſin, and expels ſalvation from ſin and forgiveneſs of it from the world. But the Bible fully evinceth the exiſtence of each, as I ſhall briefly ſhew.

Of *accountability*—"For we muſt all appear "before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt, that every "one may receive the things done in the body "according to that he hath done, whether it be

" good or bad." 2 Cor. v. 10. " Every one of " us ſhall give an account of himſelf to God. Rom. xiv. 12. " God hath appointed a day in " the which he will judge the world," &c. Acts xvii. 31.

Of *praiſe*—" Do that which is good, and then " thou ſhalt have praiſe of the ſame." Rom. xiii. " 3. Well done good and faithful ſervant." Matt. xxv. 21.

Of *blame*—" Then began Jeſus to upbraid the " cities wherein moſt of his mighty works were " done, becauſe they repented not." Matt. xi. 20. " O thou wicked and ſlothful ſervant!" Matt. xxv. 26.

Of *rewards*—" Chriſt will reward every man " according to his works." Matt. xvi. 27. " Great " is your reward in heaven." Matt. v. 12.

Of *puniſhment*—Various inſtances we have of God having puniſhed ſinners even in this world; as his drowning the antideluvians—burning the inhabitants of Sodom—deſtroying a great number of the Iſraelites in the wilderneſs, &c. &c. " And " finally vengeance will be taken on them who " know not God, and obey not the Goſpel." 2 Theſ. i. 8. " And all on the left hand of the " judge will be obliged to go into everlaſting pu- " niſhment." Matt. xxv. and cloſe.

Of *ſin*.—" We have ſinned againſt the Lord " God, we and our fathers." Jer. iii. 25. " If " we ſay we have not ſinned, we make God a liar. 1 John i. 10. If any hypotheſis ſay men have not ſinned, it makes God a liar: but Mr. C.'s hypotheſis ſays men have not ſinned—ergo, Mr. C.'s hypotheſis makes God a liar.—" We have all " ſinned and come ſhort of the glory of God." Rom. iii. 23.

Of *salvation from sin*—"He ſhall ſave his "people from their ſins." Matt. i. 21. "This "is a faithful ſaying, &c. that Jeſus Chriſt came "into the world to ſave ſinners." 1 Tim. i. 15. But neceſſity ſays it is not a faithful, but a falſe "ſaying—"Behold the Lamb of God that taketh "away the ſin of the world." John. i. 29.

Of *forgiveneſs*—"Who is a God like unto thee, "that pardoneth iniquity," &c. Mich. vii. 18. "Her ſins which are many are forgiven her." Luke vii. 47. "In whom we have redemption "through his blood, even the forgiveneſs of ſins." Col. i. 14. Theſe paſſages not only evince the particulars above-mentioned, but human agency alſo; it being impoſſible for them to exiſt on any other principle. You will now judge and conclude reſpecting the import of the ſcriptures produced in this addreſs, as appears to you moſt eligible. In my opinion they evidently prove that men are not merely inſtruments, and their actions neceſſary, but agents, and that their actions are free, not in the eſtimation of the vulgar only, but really ſo, and that in the eſtimation even of God himſelf.

If Mr. Crombie think he can fairly explain them, ſo as to make it appear they mean the contrary, he is invited to do it. My opinion is by no means enervated by his aſſertion already quoted where he tells us "It may be proved that the phra-"ſeology employed in thoſe ſcriptures which aſ-"cribe agency to man is an accommodation to po-"pular capacity, and that the language of ſcripture "is ſuited to common conception." p. 81. The common conception of the generality of mankind has been in all ages that they were agents; and Dr. Prieſtly ſays "He does not think the ſacred wri-

" ters, ſtrictly ſpeaking, were neceſſarians, and " that very probably had they been interrogated " on the ſubject of neceſſity, they would have an- " ſwered in a manner unfavorable to it." Illuſtration of Philoſophical Neceſſity, p. 133 This, though very honeſt and candid in the Doctor, does not look with a favorable aſpect to his ſentiment as a neceſſarian, for if the ſacred writers were not neceſſarians they were libertarians, and believed that God inſpired them to write aſſerted liberty, ſo that according to the Doctor's own conceſſion, the Bible, even in the opinion of its ſacred penmen, does not evince neceſſity bu liberty. And it may be juſt to think that they underſtood the true import of what they wrote on this ſubject as well as our neceſſarian philoſophers, or any others who may ſuppoſe neceſſity ſupported by the Bible. Now according to Mr. C.'s own principle, the popular capacity and common conception of mankind originated in God: It was he who compelled them to conceive that they were agents—that they were ſinners, &c. though he knew it was no ſuch thing, that they were not agents, but merely inſtruments in his hand, and as ſuch that they were incapable of ſinning; ſo that the erroneous conception he created in them, and what he obliges every libertarian now to believe—all he tells us about man being fallen by tranſgreſſion from his original rectitude—all he ſays concerning ſin—his ſaving men from ſin—men forſaking ſin—his pardoning ſin—reſpecting praiſe, blame, reward and puniſhment, and whatever elſe we find in the Bible which aſcribes agency to man—the whole, I ſay, is a mere farce—a ſcene of deluſion—yes, and God is its author! Not in conſequence of the poverty of *language* ſurely; for a

more *copious* language was eſſential for him thus to deceive his creatures, than firſt to have informed them that they were merely inſtruments in his hands. But would it not be better to abſtract thoſe deceptive parts from the Bible, to caſt them from us with deteſtation as unfriendly and injurious, and only keep the remainder? Or rather, would it not be better to throw aſide the whole book at once? For if ſo very conſiderable a part of it, which is looked upon by chriſtians in general, as conſiſting of important realities, be deceptive and falſe, why may not the reſt be the ſame? Certainly, if God can deceive us in ſo many inſtances, he is capable of doing it in more. In the one part he as abſolutely affirms that men have ſinned, that he ſent his Son to ſave ſinners; that he pardons ſin, &c. as he doth in the other, that beſide himſelf there is no God—that he is good and compaſſionate, and that all things are open and naked in his view: And if there be no truth in the former, by what can it be proved there is any in the latter. And if what be ſaid of the divine preſcience is not to be relied on, it is impoſſible for any thing to be advanced with certainty from it. But neceſſity, by aſcribing all things to God, extends its deception beyond the limits of the Bible—it makes him the author of all the deception in the world; and holds him to view as the greateſt jugler in exiſtence; not only as exhibiting things to his creatures in a falſe light, but impelling them to believe they are what he pretends them to be. A very different repreſentation this of the Divine Being from that given of him in the Bible, which informs us he is perfect! ſuperlative rectitude—that he is righteous in all his ways and holy in all his works—that all his

ways are truth itſelf—that he commands his creatures to avoid falſity and deception, and ſtrictly to adhere to truth and every where condemns hypocriſy and lying. Can it then be juſt to believe he is that jugler—that father of deceit and lies which our author's doctrine repreſents him to be? Can it be right to think he is himſelf guilty of that which he commands his creatures to avoid, and ſo ſeverely condemns in them? Far, far be it from us thus diſhonorably and blaſphemouſly to think of ſo great and good a Being! I obſerve further, that if all things originate in God, and men are merely inſtruments in his hands, as neceſſity teacheth, it muſt be that all the books in the world originate in him. It was he that impelled the different perſons to write them—or rather, it was he himſelf wrote the whole by them as his inſtruments; as much thoſe of a ludicrous and lewd, profane and blaſphemous, ſceptical and atheiſtical nature, as the prophecies in the Old Teſtament, and the Goſpels and Epiſtles in the New; therefore, all the books ever written beſide the Bible are as really the word and work of God, as the Bible itſelf. Now the Bible informs us that God, his word, and works, are truth: Deut. xxxii. 4. Dan. iv. 37. John xvii. 17: and according to the neceſſarian principle, it is God himſelf who affirms this: it follows, that all the books ever written in the world muſt be true, or that neceſſity is falſe. But various of theſe books are entirely fabulous, therefore not true: and thoſe which aſſert contrarieties—thoſe which aſſert that God exiſts in *one* perſon only, and thoſe which aſſert that he exiſts in *three* perſons—thoſe which affirm that ſalvation is definite, and thoſe which contend that it is indefinite, &c. cannot all be true; conſequently, neceſſity is falſe. I ſee no

way of fairly evading this, but by denying that God, his word, and works, are truth; and could this be proved, then, did the Bible favor neceſſity, yea, did God in it affirm that it is the only true doctrine in exiſtence, it would not demand our aſſent, nor be rational in us to believe it. But being aſſured by God himſelf that he is truth, and that his word is the ſame, I am more diſpoſed to believe him than I am to believe any fallible man, or ſet of fallible men, though philoſophers, who may aſſert the contrary, ſhould any be bold enough to do it. And I am perſuaded, and I think my perſuaſion properly founded, that the Bible, the word, the truth, of God, is ſo far from eſtabliſhing the neceſſarian hypotheſis, that it hews down the poiſonous tree, body and branches, and evinces that of liberty.

And eſtabliſhing neceſſity by reaſon and philoſophy without the Bible is, I think, impoſſible. Much has been ſaid about natural religion—the light of nature, and the power and attainments of reaſon: a great deal has been claimed by anti-ſcriptural writers, and too much granted them by ſome chriſtian writers. Moſt, if not all, anti-ſcripture authors, ancient and modern, have known more or leſs of revelation, oral or written; and many of the latter have had the Bible to peruſe at pleaſure, and what they have judged to be in harmony with reaſon they have adopted, and then ſuppoſed and repreſented it was attainable by reaſon. But this is not fair dealing: even ſuch as have been educated in the belief of revealed theology, and to whom it has been for a ſeries of years familiar, may think that more is diſcoverable by reaſon than in my opinion is. Had Mr. C. been conveyed in his infant ſtate to a barba-

rous and uninformed iſland, and there brought up without knowing there was any ſuch book as the Bible exiſting, and entirely ignorant of all theology, only inſtructed by his attendant in philoſophy and aſtronomy, &c. &c. he might, when matured, have perceived that inanimate bodies cannot act without being acted on; that ſome of them invincibly impel others of the ſame kind; but there being no analogy between inanimate and intelligent exiſtences, he could not have inferred from the one to the other: he might have diſcovered that external objects, ideas, reaſons, arguments, &c. prompt man to action, and aid him in his determinations; but he never could have proved that they invincibly impel him, nor that he does not poſſeſs a ſelf-determining power. He might have believed the eternity of matter—that vegetable, animal, and rational beings have exiſted in their ſpecies from everlaſting. Or from the accurate order of the planets; particularly from the exact and ſurpriſing evolutions of the Earth, and its aſſociate the moon, the ſtupendous conſtruction of man, and the fitneſs of different objects to each other, he might have thought they were produced by ſome great Intelligence, or that each planet had a diſtinct Creator. He might have believed in the exiſtence of one God only, of two, three, thirty, or thirty thouſand, as did Cicero. Or, finding good and evil to be in the world, he might have believed in the exiſtence of two great principles, the *one* good, and the author of all good; the *other* evil, and the author of all evil, as did the Manicheans. But had he been moſt diſpoſed to fix on one intelligent Supreme only, he might have believed him to be eternal, wiſe, and powerful; but he could not have known whether he were im-

menſe or limited ; whether mutable or immutable ; whether he poſſeſſed preſcience or otherwiſe; whether he were wholly benevolent, or but in part. From the exiſtence of *good* and *evil*, he might have thought him partly *benevolent* and partly *malignant* ; he might have ſuppoſed men neceſſary beings, and as ſuch, incapable of ſinning ; or that they were free, and from the irrational and flagitious conduct of ſome, that they had offended their Creator—that if they repented he would pardon them, or that he would not, but puniſh them according to the demerit of their crimes. On contemplating the dead, had the thought ariſen in his mind whether they would ever be reorganized, and live in a future ſtate, he probably would have been diſpoſed to believe their exiſtence terminated in death. But after all his philoſophical reaſonings and theological ſearches and reſearches, it would not have been in his power to have eſtabliſhed neceſſity—to have found out and evinced there is but one agent in nature—that this agent acts neceſſarily, and is therefore himſelf a neceſſary being—that men are only inſtruments—mere machines—that the vileſt of the vile are impelled by God to perpetrate their blackeſt deeds and moſt horrid crimes—that he is the abſolute author and ſole cauſe of all the ſin committed in the world, and that ever hath been committed—that thoſe who ſuffer leaſt here will be immediately removed from this world to a ſtate of bliſs, and that thoſe who neceſſarily ſuffer moſt here will be conveyed to ſome other part of the univerſe there to ſuffer during the divine pleaſure, though they never diſobeyed the will of God, nor offended him in any one inſtance—and that finally they will be taken from thence to their brethren

in bliſs to be happy together everlaſtingly!! Inſtead of its being in his power to have made theſe diſcoveries, moſt, if not all of his concluſions, had he formed any, would at beſt have amounted to nothing more than conjecture and uncertainty. The opinions of the ancient philoſophers were various: the theology of ſuch of the heathen as now exiſt, who are unacquainted with revelation, is exceeding low, erroneous, and degrading: and had not we been divinely taught, we ſhould now be ſitting in the region of darkneſs, filled with anxiety, and panting after information; but bleſſed be God, the Sun of Righteouſneſs hath appeared above our horizon, illuminated our hemiſphere, and diffuſed his bright rays around us—Yes, God hath compaſſionated our condition, made known to us his excellent moral character, favored us with a revelation which, abſtracted from human adulteration and rationally underſtood, is highly honorable to himſelf and cheering to men—purifies and enobles the ſoul—opens to the view of the mind an extenſive and moſt delightful proſpect, and promiſeth all that heart can wiſh. To it may we pay proper attention, and by it be everlaſtingly benefited. Having examined neceſſity on the ground of revelation, and on that of abſtracted reaſon and philoſophy, and finding it not ſupported on either, and there being no other ground to try it on, I ſhall now cloſe this protracted addreſs, and with reſpect remain,

Dear Sir,

*Yours.*

# LETTER III.

DEAR SIR,

I now preſent you my third addreſs, which ſhall be but ſhort. Mr. Crombie, in his laſt chapter, takes a general view of the ſyſtems of philoſophical liberty and neceſſity, with regard to their ſpeculative principles and practical effects. Brief attention has been already paid to the two ſyſtems, with regard to their ſpeculative principles. The practical effect of neceſſity Mr. C. conſiders as ſuperior to that of liberty; but on his own principle (which he allows) it is evident that all human actions and all events are predetermined, abſolutely ordained and unalterably fixed by God, according to his unfruſtrable will: ſo that if it be his will and he hath ordained that the farmer ſhall plough and ſow his ground, reap a plentiful harveſt, and carry his corn to market, and that others ſhall purchaſe it, it will be done, otherwiſe not: if that he ſhall, contrary to all reaſon, expect an event to be produced, without uſing the means eſſential to be uſed by him for the event to be produced, he will and cannot but expect it. If that the libertarian ſhall exert himſelf to obtain a deſired end—if that he ſhall aſcribe to himſelf the glory of ſucceſs—if that he ſhall be ſo vain as to cheriſh pride on account of any natural or acquired excellence—if that he ſhall conceive of thoſe of his fellow-creatures who injure him as being agents, ſhall be wrath with them, and pour his fury on them by way of retaliation—or if that he ſhall ſhew them lenity—if that he ſhall encou-

rage ſinners to perpetrate the moſt flagitious crimes —or if that he ſhall endeavour to reſtrain them from evil, it will not be poſſible for him to avoid either. If that I ſhall be virtuous, I cannot but be ſo—if that I ſhall pray, I ſhall perform the devout exerciſe—if that I ſhall not, I muſt neceſſarily live without praying—if that I ſhall practice vice, and habituate myſelf to utter the moſt horrid imprecations he will impel me to it—if that I ſhall be inclined to this or that, whether good or bad, the beſt action or the worſt, he will inſpire the inclination, otherwiſe it will not exiſt:—If that you ſhall be a neceſſarian, he will diſpoſe you to believe and adopt the hypotheſis—if that you ſhall be a libertarian, and act as ſuch, he will oblige you to embrace the principle and practice accordingly; and ſo of all human views, reaſonings, ſentiments, emotions and volitions, and every interior and exterior action, and all the motives and means it is the pleaſure of God to employ, muſt effectuate every end they are employed to effectuate; the whole is ſo abſolutely fixed that all the actions performed by men they are unavoidably obliged to perform—not one of them can be omitted, nor any one beſide be performed by them. Now if all human actions indefinitely be produced by neceſſity, it is certain that all ſuch of them as are contrary to the divine law are produced by neceſſity; and that all the ſpecies of ſin and wickedneſs in the world are the practical effect of it; and I think it juſt to believe that theſe are more than thoſe which partake of the nature of true moral excellence; ſo that neceſſity produces more evil than good. Indeed Mr. C. is honeſt enough to tell us, "neceſſity teacheth that the "Deity is the cauſe of all the vice that now is,

" has been, or ever will be " p 137. But according to liberty, God impels none to vice; ſo far from it, he every where prohibits it, and commands all men to repent, to be virtuous and good, and encourages them to it by great and glorious promiſes, and by affording them ſufficient aid to enable them to effect it. Whether then our author have reaſon or not to boaſt of the practical effect of neceſſity, I leave you to judge. But he tells us further, that in his apprehenſion, " neceſſity communicates the moſt exalted idea of " the ſupreme Being." p. 492. This is, to be ſure, indiſputably juſt; for according to neceſſity, the ſupreme Being knows that all men are merely inſtruments in his hands, and that they have no action of their own, conſequently he knows that they are not, cannot be accountable beings; cannot be the ſubjects of praiſe, blame, rewards or puniſhments;—that they have never ſinned, that he cannot ſave them from ſin, and that he cannot pardon their ſins: yet he explicitly informs and abſolutely aſſures us, that men are accountable, that they are the ſubjects of praiſe, blame, rewards and puniſhments, that they have all ſinned, that he ſent his Son to ſave them from ſin, and that he pardons ſin:—and this he invincibly impels millions and millions to believe to be true; though he know, according to neceſſity, there is not a word of truth in the whole, but that it is a ſcene of deluſion and falſity; ſo that neceſſity repreſents him as a complete deceiver, and the Father of lies. Again: The Supreme abſolutely commanded Adam not to eat of the tree of knowledge, explicitly told him that he ſhould not eat of it, and if he did he ſhould ſurely die; yet he ſecretly impelled him to eat, ſo that he could not

poſſibly avoid it, and then arraigned him at his bar, deprived him of life, and reduced him to his original for eating. The anti-deluvians he impelled to be ſo vile as that their wickedneſs was great in the earth, and then brought a deluge and drowned them all for their wickedneſs, eight perſons excepted. The inhabitants of Sodom he impelled to be ſinners exceedingly, and then rained down fire and brimſtone from heaven, and conſumed them all for what he had compelled them to. Many of the Iſraelites he impelled to tempt and prove himſelf; then he was grieved with them, ſaid they always erred—ſwore in his wrath they ſhould not enter into his reſt, and cauſed their carcaſſes to fall in the wilderneſs for it. Thoſe of them that remained, and their deſcendants he commanded to avoid idolatry; yet he impelled them to worſhip idols, and obliged them to ſacrifice their ſons and daughters even to devils:—Then his wrath was kindled againſt them, and though his own inheritance, he abhorred them, and delivered them over to their enemies. Joab, as well as others, he commanded to do no murder, yet he moved him to take Abner aſide to ſpeak to him quietly, and then to ſtab him under the fifth rib ſo that he died. To the inhabitants of Judea he ſent his Son to bleſs them in turning away every one of them from his iniquities, but moſt of them he impelled to reject the friendly meſſenger, and to continue in their iniquities; then he expelled them from their own land, and diſperſed them through the whole earth for their crying abominations, for what himſelf had impelled them to do. Many in the ſeventeenth century he impelled to embrace and profeſs proteſtantiſm—Lewis XIV. of France he moved and

obliged to torment, plunder, banish, and murder, near two millions of them in one year, for embracing and profeſſing it. Some he inſpires to make human laws—ſome he impels to break them; and others he obliges to puniſh the delinquents, and to cut many of them off from the land of the living, to prevent his doing further miſchief by them, and to deter others. Some he impels to believe that he himſelf is but one perſon, and to contend for that principle—others he impels to believe that he exiſts in three perſons, and to cenſure thoſe as graceleſs who cannot perceive the hypotheſis ſupported by the Bible. Some he inſpires to believe it is his pleaſure to ſave only a part of mankind, and eternally to damn the reſt for what they never poſſibly could avoid—others he obliges to view the ſentiment as unſcriptural and horrid, and as making the Deity a partial tyrant. Doctor Gregory he moved to write againſt neceſſity—to repreſent neceſſarians as being either *fools* or *lunatics*, and to ſpeak unfavorably of a diſtinguiſhed modern philoſopher. Mr. Crombie he made choice of and moved to oppoſe Dr. Gregory, to be incenſed againſt him, repeatedly to call him "our ESSAYER," and to give him a pretty ſmart flogging,—not for his repreſenting neceſſarians as *fools* or *lunatics*, "for this," ſaith he, 'can only provoke a ſmile;" but "for endeavouring indiſcriminately to fix an imputation "of diſhoneſty on his adverſaries, becauſe, forſooth, they will not think as he thinks, and for "degrading the moſt diſtinguiſhed philoſopher of "the age; which inſolence," he tells us, "language fails to chaſtiſe in terms of ſufficient "ſharpneſs or ſeverity." p. 425 The great and exemplary forbearance and lenity here ſhewn towards the Doctor by Mr. C. you may conſider,

if you pleaſe, as a proof of what he tells us elſe-
where—i. e. "A neceſſarian beholds in every
"evil inflicted on him by a fellow-creature, the
"agency of a ſuperior Being, that he regards his
"enemy as purely an inſtrument in the hand of
"God," &c. &c. "and conſiders the paſſion
"which prompted to the deed as the inſpiration
"of the Deity; hence his reſentment againſt the
"individual naturally ſubſides, and his attention
"is diverted from him to the ſupreme cauſe of
"his calamity." p. 466, 467.

I proceed—Andrew on the ſtage he impels to utter all his falſehoods, and to exhibit all his fooleries, and the auditors and ſpectators to be delighted with what they hear and ſee. The jugler behind the ſcene in the fair he impels to actuate Punch and his puppets, and to make them do what he pleaſes! A partial repreſentation this of our author's intelligent machinery—ſome he impels to intoxication, to curſe, ſwear, and blaſpheme; others to oppreſs the fatherleſs and widow, and to grind the face of the poor; ſome to neglect their buſineſs, and to give themſelves up to luxury and diſſipation, and thereby to bring themſelves and dependents from affluence to penury; others to cheat, rob, and plunder; and ſome he impels to imbrue their hands in human blood, and to murder the innocent: all of whom may unitedly ſay, "We
"are not deviating from the will of the Supreme,
"for it is his will, yea, his unſtruſtrable will, that
"we ſhould act juſt as we do; and he invincibly
"impels us, ſo that we cannot poſſibly avoid it:
"and our conduct is a part of his wiſe plan, and
"will ultimately make not only for our own hap-
"pineſs, but for the happineſs of the community
"at large. Remorſe we know not, nor is there
"any juſt ground for ſhame; we will therefore go

" on in our career, ſo long as we ſhall be diſpoſed,
" and the Supreme ſhall continue to impel us ſo to
" do. And when we come to quit the ſtage of life,
" ſhould we have nothing to reflect on but a vi-
" cious courſe, *necessity, which is most consola-*
" *tory in the hour of distress*," p. 492, " will
" ſupport and conſole us—yes, in the very agonies
" of death, and immediate view of eternity, it
" will inſpire us with the comfortable ſatisfaction,
" that after continuing in purgatory till our vi-
" cious habits are reformed, we ſhall be conveyed
" from thence to bliſs, there to be happy in the
" enjoyment of God for ever. And we ſincerely
" thank our worthy friend, Mr. Crombie, and
" adorn and honor his brow with the choiceſt lau-
" rels for communicating to us the knowledge of
" ſo glorious a poſition!—A poſition which al-
" lows us full liberty to gratify our corrupt pro-
" penſities to the utmoſt, without remorſe, without
" ſhame, without doing wrong! and which gives us
" encouragement to expect and believe, that ulti-
" mately we ſhall be as happy as the moſt virtuous,
" pious, and devout."

Before I proceed, I juſt remark that, according to neceſſity, the Supreme commands men not to do that which it is his will they ſhall do; and that he invincibly impels them to do what he abſolutely commands them not to do, and then pretends to be angry with them, and blame and puniſh them for doing it. But according to liberty, in his commanding men to avoid this and do that he is ſincere—they violate his command without force, and in puniſhing the obſtinate and finally impenitent he is juſt. But I go on.—On the neceſſarian principle the Supreme worſhips himſelf: For men being merely inſtruments in his hands,

all actions, ſtrictly and philoſophically ſpeaking, are performed by him; and if all actions be performed by him, then all thoſe of divine worſhip are; conſequently he worſhips himſelf—adores himſelf—confeſſeth the ſins of men to himſelf, though he knows they have never committed any—implores himſelf to pardon their ſins, though he knows they have none to be pardoned—intreats himſelf to impart to them all the bleſſings they need in future—praiſes himſelf for thoſe already imparted, &c. And he not only worſhips himſelf, but alſo all the idols in exiſtence to whom homage is paid, notwithſtanding he repeatedly forbids idol worſhip, and aſſerts it is that abominable thing that he hates! Indeed, on this principle there is no religion nor religious act in the world which applies to men, the whole being aſcribable to God only, as all acts originate in him, and are performed by him. But on the principle of liberty, he is worſhipped by men and not by himſelf. Theſe are ſome of the exalted ideas communicated by neceſſity of the ſupreme Being! And exalted, doubtleſs, they are, as they hold him to view in the elevated and ſublime character of a complete deceiver, and the father of lies—as acting with the greateſt duplicity, and as worſhipping himſelf and all the deaf, dumb, and liteleſs idols in the world!!

My friend will now permit me to obſerve, that neceſſity entirely and univerſally deſtroys gratitude in man to man: You relieve your worthy, indigent neighbour—but, according to neceſſity, you are invincibly impelled to it by God—or rather, it is God that does it by you, who are merely an inſtrument in his hand: the gratitude of the recipient is therefore due to God only; but according to liberty you perform the benevolent act freely,

when it was in your power to have *avoided* it. Your neighbour then owes his gratitude to you for relieving him, and to God for putting it in your power to do it; and so of every benevolent act performed by man. Necessity also, *in toto*, annihilates the Gospel, and all the glory that is due to God for it: The Gospel embraces men as sinners, and is the good news, the glad tidings of its being the pleasure of God to deliver them from the demerits of their vices, to restore them to his own image—to pardon and make them for ever happy. But according to necessity, men have never incurred the divine displeasure—never sinned—stand in no need of pardon, therefore the Gospel can have no existence; and if there be no Gospel, there can be no glory due to God for it: But according to liberty, men have sinned—the Gospel is an important reality, and glory in the highest is ascribed, and will eternally be ascribed to God for it; and those who have a true sense of their awful condition as sinners, are transformed to the divine likeness, and whose hearts are cheered and made to rejoice by the Gospel, love and extol God for favouring them with it. Necessity likewise robs the Son of God—the appointed Saviour of sinners, of his crown, and even blots him out of being: For if men have never sinned (as on the necessarian hypothesis they certainly have not), then they are not lost, and if not lost, they do not stand in need of a Saviour, consequently the idea of Jesus Christ being their Saviour must be altogether futile: But on the libertarian hypothesis men have sinned, Jesus Christ exists as their Saviour, his dignified crown remains on his sacred head, and shines with brilliance in the eye of the believing and obedient beholder, to whom he is precious.



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I ſubjoin that neceſſity deprives man of his ſupreme bliſs: According to neceſſity, men are perfectly innocent, and incapable of being otherwiſe; for being merely inſtruments in the hands of God, it is impoſſible for them to tranſgreſs in any one point. All, therefore, have a claim on him, as their Creator, for happineſs, ſhould it be in his power to make all happy; which there is reaſon to doubt, if he be himſelf, as well as man, a *neceſsary Being*, as our author conceives him to be. p. 279, 280. But ſhould it be in his power to make all happy, their happineſs cannot be ſo great as on the oppoſite principle; for, according to liberty, all the redeemed finally exiſting in glory, will ever have to reflect and ruminate thus.

"In the world of probation from whence we "came, we rebelled againſt our Maker, forfeited "all enjoyment, and deſerved everlaſting deſtruc- "tion, but he was graciouſly pleaſed to commi- "ſerate our condition—to love us—to ſend his "Son to redeem us from death—to deliver us "from the demerit and dominion of ſin—to re- "ſtore us to a ſtate of moral rectitude, and to "bring us to the eternal enjoyment of unutterable "bliſs." Theſe conſiderations, ſurely, will create in them the moſt profound humility, invigorate their love, and cauſe their pureſt gratitude and praiſe copiouſly to flow to their benevolent Father and gracious Redeemer, and muſt, with the ſublime and ſacred pleaſure which will ariſe in them from the delightful exerciſe, cauſe their felicity and joy to be great beyond all poſſible deſcription But on the neceſſarian principle theſe things can have no exiſtence! And ah! without them what will, or rather, what would heaven be? But I leave you to enlarge.

Behold then the wiſdom of God ſuperlatively diſplayed in creating man a free agent, capable of ſtanding and capable of falling: had he ſtood for ever, he would have been for ever happy, and glorified his Creator; but he fell—not by force, for ſo he could not have fallen, but freely; and being by his fall become obnoxious to the divine diſpleaſure, there was opportunity for God to employ his moral perfections in favour of the guilty:—It was now in his power to love thoſe who had forfeited his love, to ſave thoſe from everlaſting deſtruction who had, by their ſin, expoſed themſelves to it; to bring back to himſelf thoſe who had ſtrayed far from him—to pardon their offences, and to make them happier than he poſſibly could have made them, had he not created them free agents:—and all this he has done, and will do, and that of his own free grace and unmerited mercy: For men when fallen had no claim on him, nor ever could; but had he created them only inſtruments, mere machines, it would not have been in his power to have done theſe things, which he well knew, and therefore avoided it, and fixed on a plan that included free agency—a plan which moſt eminently diſplays his wiſdom and benevolence—a plan which ſecures to himſelf the higheſt glory, and to his beloved Son the brighteſt crown—a plan which raiſes fallen men from a ſtate of degradation and ſuffering to the high dignity of being the ſons of God, and to the eternal enjoyment of the greateſt poſſible felicity! Let us then, by the aid of divine grace, inceſſantly admire this truly admirable plan!—love, obey, and glorify its great Author—believe on, eſteem, and honor his Son—and ſo conduct ourſelves here as to be unſpeakably happy in the enjoyment of God

and Jeſus Chriſt, and in celebrating with grateful hearts, and in moſt lofty ſtrains, the forfeited love and benevolence of our heavenly Father, and the redeeming grace of our kind and compaſſionate Saviour, in the realms of bliſs for ever hereafter.

What I have advanced I now ſubmit to the candid inſpection and impartial judgment of my worthy friend, and with reſpect remain,

Dear Sir,

*Yours*,

*Frome*, 1799. *J. G.*

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## *POSTSCRIPT.*

If God have formed man ſo as to cauſe the contexture of his nature to operate in ſuch ways as to oblige him unavoidably to act juſt as he does, or if his actions be produced by the invincible influence of external objects, created and appointed by God ſo to influence him, or if they be produced partly by the one, and partly by the other, in either caſe man can be only an inſtrument in the hand of God, or a meer machine. And it being evident that the principle of man's being only an inſtrument, or machine, deſtroys accountability, praiſe, blame, reward and puniſhment, the exiſtence of ſin, ſalvation from it, and forgiveneſs of it, and that we muſt give up all theſe, and riſk the conſequence of ſo doing were we to adopt the principle, I think that neceſſarians ought to produce exceeding ſtrong proof in favor of their hypotheſis, before they can reaſonably deſire us to embrace it. But on ſuppoſition neceſſity be true, the views, ſenti-

ments, and all the interior and exterior actions of every libertarian are juſt ſuch as God would have them to be, and as he cauſeth them to be. And the ground occupied by libertarians is certainly as ſafe as that occupied by neceſſarians;—as all ſuch of the former who are virtuous and good will be conveyed immediately from earth to heaven, as well as the ſame characters of the latter. And ſuch libertarians as die in the habit of vice, will ſuffer no more in a future ſtate than neceſſarians of the ſame deſcription, and will, as well as they, when their vicious habits are reformed, be delivered from ſuffering, and conveyed to everlaſting happineſs. But on ſuppoſition the libertarian be right, the views and ſentiments of the neceſſarian muſt be wrong, cannot originate in God, nor be approved by him. I ſhall only ſubjoin, that the New Teſtament exhibits faith in Jeſus Chriſt as eſſential to the final happineſs of thoſe who are favored with the Bible. Faith in Chriſt, I judge to be believing him to be the promiſed Meſſiah—the Saviour of ſinners—embracing his doctrines ſo as to be properly influenced by them—and receiving his laws ſo as to conform to them. I ſaid believing Jeſus Chriſt to be the Saviour of ſinners—"Thou ſhalt call his name Jeſus, for he ſhall "ſave his people from their ſins." Matt. i. 21. "This is a faithful ſaying, that Jeſus Chriſt came "into the world to ſave ſinners." 1 Tim. i. 16. And the ſame idea runs through the New Teſtament. But how neceſſarians can believe in Jeſus Chriſt as the Saviour of ſinners, I am unable to conceive. This, with ſeriouſneſs and ſolemnity, and from principles of real friendſhip and reſpect for Mr. Crombie and other neceſſarians, I take the liberty to recommend to his and their impartial and attentive thought.

# APPENDIX.

I SHALL now ſtate ſome of the particulars wherein neceſſity and predeſtination bear an affinity to each other.

The import of the terms neceſſity and predeſtination is the ſame; as, according to both, all things are predeſtinated and unalterably fixed by God. But it being my deſign to deſcend to particulars, I obſerve,

1ſt. That neceſſity and predeſtination bear an affinity to each other, as both maintain that the will of God is unfruſtrable—that it is his unfruſtrable will all things paſt, preſent, and to come, ſhould be what they have been, are, and will be. The Rev. S. Rowles, who is a predeſtinarian, in his addreſs to Dr. Prieſtley, ſays, "It is ſafe for "us to conclude, I think, with you, that every "event paſt, preſent, and to come, exactly cor-"reſponds to the unchangeable, unfruſtrable will "of God." Revealed Religion Supported. p. 36.

Mr. Jonathan Edwards repreſents God as having a ſecret and revealed will, and that the one may diſapprove and oppoſe the other will, and determine without any inconſiſtence. Enquiry into Freedom of Will, p. 368. It is the ſecret will of God, I ſhould ſuppoſe, that is conſidered as being unfruſtrable, it being evident that his revealed will is fruſtrated daily. According to this hypotheſis, the ſecret and revealed will of God are at variance in millions and millions of inſtances, not to ſay continually at war with each other: as his revealed will commands men to avoid immoral actions, but it is his ſecret will that they ſhould

not avoid them any farther than they do. And his ſecret will being unfruſtrable, not only oppoſes the revealed, but prevails againſt it. Whether the votaries of this ſentiment think God to be ſincere in repreſenting it his will that men ſhould avoid moral evil, in commanding them to avoid it, and threatening them with evil if they do not, or whether they think him chargeable with duplicity, I ſhall not take upon me to ſay.

2d. Neceſſity aſſerts that all events are pre-ordained by God; predeſtination aſſerts that the decrees of God are his eternal purpoſe, according to the counſel of his will, whereby for his own glory he hath foreordained whatſoever comes to paſs.

3d. Neceſſity and predeſtination are alike in that, according to both the doctrines, exhortations, commands, expoſtulations threatenings, and promiſes of the Bible, cannot produce one good effect in the mind nor conduct of any perſon, further than it is the unfruſtrable will of God, and he hath foreordained they ſhould, nor than what they do. The ſame might be obſerved of all the preaching and religious means in the chriſtian world.

4th. According to neceſſity and predeſtination, it is the unfruſtrable will of God, and he hath foreordained, that only a part of mankind ſhould be virtuous and good in this life, who, according to neceſſity as well as predeſtination, are properly the *Elect*.

5th. On the neceſſarian and predeſtinarian principles, thoſe who are virtuous and good in this life, are made ſo by invincible operations and irreſiſtible influence.

6th. Neceſſity and predeſtination are of the ſame bad tendency, as both tend to influence ſin-

ners to think thus—" If we be of the Elect, ſome " of thoſe God hath foreordained to be virtuous " and good in this life, he will in his own time, " and by his irreſiſtible influence, make us ſuch, " let us prior to that period live how we may :— " but if we be not, we cannot form thoſe charac- " ters do what we will." Careleſs profeſſors thus : " Our being indifferent about religion, and at " times vain and immoral, prove it is the unfruſ- " trable will of God we ſhould be ſo at preſent : " and if it ſhould be his unfruſtrable will in time " to come we ſhould be otherwiſe, he will effect " the change." Supine and worldly minded preachers thus : " It is the unfruſtrable will of " God that we ſhould at preſent be more concer- " ned to *fleece* than to *feed* our flocks ; and if he " have foreordained that we ſhould in future exert " ourſelves to alarm ſinners and bring them to re- " pentance—to convince lukewarm profeſſors of " their danger, to encourage the fearful but wor- " thy chriſtian, and to comfort the virtuous, ſpi- " ritual, and devout, he will ſtir us up to do it." And all who are inclined to comply with tempta- tion, and diſpoſed to diſhoneſty and diſſipation thus : " If we act according to our propenſities " we ſhall do the will of God ; and our actions " when performed will prove it was his unfruſtra- " ble will, and that he foreordained we ſhould " ſo act," &c.

7th. According to neceſſity, the non elect are invincibly impelled by internal and external mo- tives to purſue vice—and die in the habit of it : According to predeſtination, they are all born ſpiritualiy dead and morally depraved, ſo that they cannot do the will of God, nor avoid living in ſin. Saying " Man was created holy, that de- " pravity is a conſequence of diſobedience, and

" that his inability to do the will of God is not a *natural*, but a *moral* inability," is to no purpoſe. For, on the predeſtinarian principle, it was the unfruſtrable will of God all events ſhould be that ever have been, and he fore-ordained whatſoever comes to paſs as already ſhewn. And Mr. Rowles tells us in his Revealed Religion Supported, " that the introduction of ſin God willed, " or deſigned, or it had never been." p. 35. " And that creation was a voluntary effort of the " divine will, and conſequently every event at- " tendant on its exiſtence muſt be the ſame." p. 244.

Now Adam's eating of the tree of knowledge, and the depravity that followed, being events that came to paſs, events attendant on creation, ſurely according to the above, it was no more in the power of Adam to avoid eating, nor to prevent the depravity that followed, than it was to prevent God from creating the world. And his deſcendants can no more prevent being born ſpiritually dead, and morally depraved, than they can prevent their being born at all; nor than they could had their firſt parents been created depraved. And though the non-elect poſſeſs intelligence, or what is meant by a natural ability to do the will of God, they are deſtitute of what is called a moral ability to do it. And without this it is as impoſſible to do his will as it would if they were deſtitute of a natural ability, or as if they were all downright *ideots*.- And as they are all born without this moral ability, and it is not in their own power, nor in the power of any beſides, but of *God himſelf*, to create it in them, and it is not his pleaſure to do it—they are under the neceſſity of remaining deſtitute of it, and continuing in their ſpiritually dead and mo-

rally depraved ſtate, from their birth till their death. And ſuppoſing that Adam poſſeſſed this moral ability when he was about to eat of the tree of knowledge, it is certain, according to predeſtination, it was not in his power to exerciſe it ſo as to refrain from eating, which was the ſame as if he had not poſſeſſed it. So that the diſtinction between the natural and moral ability and inability, ſo much talked of by Mr. Jonathan Edwards, and others, and repreſented as a thing of great importance, is particularly, as to the non-elect, altogether futile. For if they have not in any part of their life an ability to do the will of God, of what importance is it to call their inability a moral inability, more than natural or human inability? Or by any other name? Sinners on being told from a predeſtinarian pulpit, that they can ſerve God and enjoy the bleſſings of the Goſpel *if they will*, and that *their will-not is their cannot*; might riſe and juſtly reply, "Sir, you know, according to your "own principle, that if we are of the elect we "cannot have the will to ſerve God till it is "his pleaſure to produce it in us by his *irreſiſti-"ble influence*; and that if we are not of the "elect we never *ſhall*, we *never can* poſſeſs it." And were they to be further told they ought to pray for a will to ſerve God, they might anſwer, "Available prayer is a ſpiritual act, and you tell "us that we are ſpiritually dead, and that we "were ſo born; conſequently we cannot per-"form this act, nor any other of a ſpiritual "nature, unleſs God is pleaſed to give us ſpi-"ritual life," &c. Where then, on the dangerous hypotheſis I am now ſpeaking, ſhall we fix blame? On the deſcendants of Adam for being born dead and morally depraved! No, for they

cannot prevent it: on the poor reprobates for continuing through life in the awful condition in which they were brought into being! So far from it that they call for great compaſſion:— On Adam for eating the forbidden fruit! This cannot be, becauſe it was not poſſible for him to avoid it. I ſhall leave it then to the defenders of the hypotheſis to ſay where it *ought* to be placed, and proceed.

8th. Neceſſity and Predeſtination are alike, as on both principles the reprobates ſuffer in hell without cauſe, for doing the unfruſtrable will of God, and what he fore-ordained they ſhould do, or rather becauſe it is his pleaſure they ſhould ſuffer.

9th. According to Neceſſity and Predeſtination, all the particulars mentioned originate in God.

10th. Neceſſity and Predeſtination repreſent God as the author of ſin.

Mr. Crombie honeſtly and frankly tells us, "That according to Neceſſity the deity is the "cauſe not only of all the virtue, but likewiſe "of all the vice which *is*, *has been*, or *ever will* "*exiſt*." p. 137. i. e. as appears from other parts of his Eſſay, God hath for wiſe and good ends, ſo diſpoſed the ſtate of events, as that vice neceſſarily follows.

And Mr. Jonathan Edwards ſays, "If by the "author of ſin is meant the permitter, or not "hinderer of ſin, and at the ſame time, a diſ- "poſer of the ſtate of events in ſuch a manner "for wiſe, holy, and moſt excellent ends and "purpoſes, that ſin, if it be permitted, or not "hindered, will moſt certainly and infallibly "follow. I ſay, if this be all is meant by the "author of ſin, I do not deny *that God is the*

"*author of ſin.*" Enquiry, p. 357. Though Neceſſity and Predeſtination, as allowed by Mr. Crombie and Mr. Edwards, repreſent God to be the author of ſin—according to my view both principles annihilate ſin. Having already ſhewn (in letter 2d) that ſin can have no exiſtence on the neceſſarian principle, I ſhall now confine my views chiefly to predeſtination. The Bible informs us that ſin is the tranſgreſſion of the law, and throughout holds it to view as what ought to be avoided, as a thing that is wrong, as a crime, and the ſinner as criminal, and juſtly deſerving puniſhment But if it is the unfruſtrable will of God that all things ſhould be juſt as they have been, are, and will be, and he hath fore-ordained whatſoever comes to paſs; and it, as Mr. Edwards repreſents, God hath diſpoſed the ſtate of events attendant on man in ſuch a manner as that ſin, or what is ſo called, muſt inevitably follow, unleſs prevented by himſelf; and it were not his pleaſure to prevent it, which it was not: "And all events, evil as well "as good, in the world, are ordered by infinite "wiſdom." Enquiry Freedom of Will, p. 365, 367. And if as Mr. Rowles aſſerts, every event attendant on creation is the voluntary effort of the divine will, I ſay, if ſo, all events, it is ſufficient to my preſent purpoſe to ſay, all human actions originate in God, and proceed from him; are juſt what he would have them to be, and what he cauſeth them to be: and men are only inſtruments in his hands, or mere machines invincibly impelled by him to act in every reſpect juſt as they do, ſo that they cannot act otherwiſe. How then can ſin poſſibly exiſt as a thing that is wrong—that is a crime, and man be

criminal and deſerving puniſhment, or even blame!

Mr. Edwards talks of men being left of God, that they never ſin but when they are left of him, and that they neceſſarily ſin when they are left, and ſo conſiders ſin as ariſing from men, and not from God. Ibid. p. 365. But if ſin exiſt in conſequence of God's diſpoſing the ſtate of events in the manner he hath; if men's volitions and actions are determined, and produced by the ſtrongeſt motives created and appointed by God, ſo to influence men, they are as really impelled by God as they would were he to determine and produce their volitions and actions by his immediate influence. I juſt notice further, that Mr. E. ſuppoſes God wills and orders the exiſtence of moral evil not for the ſake of what it is in itſelf, but with a view to a good end. p. 367. Doubtleſs he means with a view to redemption, the redemption of the Elect. But as ſin cannot exiſt on his principle, it cannot be that God ever willed and ordered any human actions with a view to redemption. For if there be no ſin, there can be no redemption from it, nor forgiveneſs of it. On the whole, I obſerve, that there being ſo great an affinity between Neceſſity and Predeſtination, with regard to every thing of importance reſpecting this life, as that both principles are nearly, if not altogether, one and the ſame; the conſequences which ariſe from the one, ariſe from the other; and the arguments which militate againſt Neceſſity are in force againſt Predeſtination.

But I have been exerciſing my reaſon, and reaſon is decried and things believed by the decriers of reaſon which will not ſtand the teſt of reaſon nor revelation. Yet truth and true reli-

gion are poſſeſſed only by the decriers of your reaſoners, and ſuch as are convinced of its being their duty not to continue, without examination, in the belief of what they were educated, (in the belief of, and what they had been taught by) creeds, catechiſms, and dogmatizers; but to employ the powers God hath given them impartially to ſeek truth, and to believe on proper evidence; and who ſincerely pray for divine aſſiſtance: and on ſeeing reaſon from the Bible to relinquiſh, at leaſt, ſome of their former ſentiments, and to embrace others, follow the dictates of their judgment and conſcience at the hazard of every thing with regard to men, theſe I ſay, though real belivers in Jeſus Chriſt, and patterns of virtue, benevolence and piety, are ſad heretics, and in a graceleſs ſtate; and ſo living and dying will, muſt be damned. Ah! what bigotry, cenſoriouſneſs, and miſtaken zeal may occupy the human mind! "I am not to "be judged of men's judgment." *Paul.*—The time cometh when he that killeth you thinketh he doth God ſervice. *Jeſus Chriſt.*

But I proceed to obſerve, that though Neceſſity and Predeſtination bear ſo great an affinity to each other reſpecting men in this ſtate, yet they differ widely with regard to the final iſſue of the non-elect, as the former delivers them all from future ſuffering, and conveys them to everlaſting happineſs, when their vicious habits are reformed; but the latter leaves them to ſuffer without end. And here Neceſſity triumphs over Predeſtination, or rather would were the hypotheſis properly ſupported. But both, in my opinion, are unfounded. The Bible aſſerts that "fornicators, adulterers, and other characters, "ſhall not inherit the kingdom of God." 1 Cor.

vi. 9, 10. The parable of the talents, Matt. 25. repreſents the tranſactions of the general judgment. The talents I conceive to be means of moral improvement poſſeſſed in this life; and as the ſlothful ſervant was, or will be, deprived of the talent he neglected, and himſelf caſt into outer darkneſs. I conclude there will be no means of moral improvement in hell. And our Lord ſaith, John ix. 4. "The night cometh "when no man can work." And in Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6. We are told, if they who were once enlightened, &c. fall, it is impoſſible to renew them again to repentance." Other ſcriptures there are which repreſent, that the wicked will be conſumed like chaff, with unquenchable fire —that they will be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction. And in Heb. x. 26, 27. "That if "we ſin wilfully after that we have received the "knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no "more ſacrifice for ſin: but a certain fearful "looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, "which ſhall devour the adverſaries."

The Predeſtinarian doctrine of perpetual puniſhment is of all doctrines the moſt diſhonorable to God. "A friend, ſome time ſince, informed "me, he had been a ſpectator" to the puniſhment inflicted on a culprit by flogging, that prior to the appointed number of ſtripes being completed, his proſecutor ſtanding by, though not the beſt of characters, was ſo much moved, that he cried hold. But not ſo with regard to God! No. For he can himſelf puniſh, not one for a few minutes only, but millions and millions even of his own offspring, and that eternally—without end! And without being moved! Yes, and for what they never could avoid, for doing what was his unfruſtrable will, and he fore-ordained they

ſhould do; or more properly becauſe it is his ſovereign pleaſure to do it! A doctrine this horrid beyond deſcription! A doctrine ſufficiently awful to ſhock the moſt inhuman of human kind! A doctrine which repreſents the beſt of beings as a partial tyrant! But it is a doctrine, I with pleaſure ſubjoin, which, though believed by ſome worthy characters, is, I am perſuaded, after many years cloſe and repeated examination, repugnant to the tenor of the Bible, and the moral character of its great Author, who is ſo far from being a partial tyrant, that he is the God of love—love itſelf—is mercitul, good, full of compaſſion, and very pitiful; who taketh no pleaſure in the death of a ſinner, but that he repent and live. Yet to ſuch as perſeveringly reject the Savior, and reſiſt the Spirit; who will not be awed by terror, nor attracted by love, to the finally impenitent he is, and will be, a conſuming fire!

I ſhall now ſtate Predeſtination as believed by the Mahometans.

"The ſixth great point which the Mohammedans are taught by the Koran to believe, is, "God's abſolute decree and predeſtination, both "of good and evil. For the orthodox doctrine "is, that whatever hath or ſhall come to paſs in "this world, whether it be good or whether it "be bad, proceedeth entirely from the divine "will, and is irrevocably fixed and recorded "from all eternity in the preſerved table; God "having ſecretly predetermined, not only the "adverſe and proſperous fortune of every per-"ſon in this world, in the moſt minute par-"ticulars, but alſo his faith or infidelity, his "obedience or diſobedience, and conſequently

" his everlaſting happineſs or miſery after " death; which fate or predeſtination it is " not poſſible by any foreſight or wiſdom to " avoid "——Sale's Preliminary Diſcourſe to his Engliſh Verſion of the Koran, ſect. 4th, p. 103. quarto edition.

I have only to add, that ſhould vehement exclamations be iſſued againſt my repreſenting, that in my opinion ſin can have no exiſtence, according to predeſtination, I ſhall not be ſurpriſed. But if any predeſtinarian can fairly prove I am miſtaken, and that ſin can exiſt as a crime in man, ſo as for him to deſerve puniſhment, or even blame, on the predeſtinarian principle, rightly underſtood, and as exhibited by the authors I have quoted, it is requeſted of him that he will be ſo friendly as to do it. Attempting to ſupercede reaſon will be to no purpoſe. Denying that man is an inſtrument, or machine will be giving up predeſtination; and ſaying, that man is an agent and acts freely, becauſe he *chooſes* to act as he does, and at the ſame time maintaining that he is unavoidably obliged to chooſe to act as he does is imbecility itſelf.

That theological diſcuſſions may be attended to with a view to edification, and conducted with moderation and candour, that error may decline daily and truth, chriſtian charity, and practical and experimental godlineſs abound, is the prayer of the Author.

*FINIS.*